CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL

VOL.10

Eiji Nonaka

CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL

WINNER OF THE Kodansha Manga Award

AND NOW, COMMEMORATING ABSOLUTELY NOTHING, THE EARTH-SHATTERING VOLUME 10

Hayashida awakens in the Empire of the Apes and learns that he's the savior prophesied in the Ancient Text. To achieve his destiny, he must venture to Mount Poplokis to retrieve the sacred Sword of Lightning. Then he must use it to defeat his sworn enemy, the dreaded That Guy.

No, we're not making this up.

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VALIANTLY FORGING AHEAD! CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL 10

"THE SURROUNDED-BY-ONE'S-ENEMIES STORY"

EIJI NONAKA

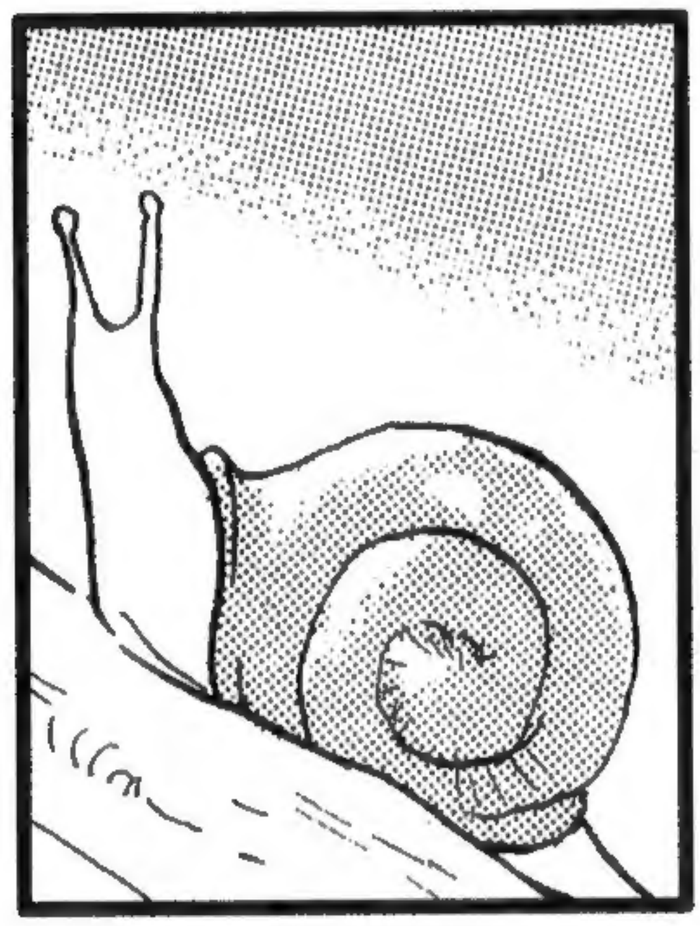


TABLE OF CONTENTS

3 Chapter 205 **Please Tell Me Now**

15 Chapter 206 **Man's Man's World**

27 Chapter 207 **Out Of Control**

33 Chapter 208 **Just My Imagination**

39 Chapter 209 **Dandy In The Underworld**

51 Chapter 210 **Monkey Business**

63 Chapter 211 **Funky Monkey Baby**

75 Chapter 212 **Theme From The Monkeys**

87 Chapter 213 **Hello, Mr. Monkey**

99 Chapter 214 **Shock The Monkey**

111 Chapter 215 **Brass Monkey**

123 Chapter 216 **Monkey Magic**

135 Chapter 217 **Monkey Changes Everything**

147 Chapter 218 **Main Man**

161 Bonus Manga **Toward The Eternal Darkness**

REGULAR MEETING OF
THE FOUR GREAT ONES

VERY WELL.
LET'S BEGIN.

CHAPTER 205: **PLEASE TELL ME NOW**

NO NEWS?

UNFORTUNATELY, WE HAVE NOTHING ON THE AGENDA. THERE IS NO NEWS.

AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT I'D LIKE TO SAY.

WHAT'S MORE, WE'VE FALLEN INTO THE TRAP LATELY OF PRESENTING PERSONAL ANECDOTES AS "NEWS," THUS REDUCING THE OVERALL SCALE OF OUR MEETINGS.

I SUPPOSE IT WAS BOUND TO HAPPEN, GIVEN HOW FREQUENTLY WE MEET.

IF ANY OF YOU HAS SOMETHING YOU'D LIKE TO MENTION NOW, DON'T HESITATE TO SPEAK UP.

THAT'S WHY GOING FORWARD, I'D LIKE FOR EVERYONE TO BRING SOME PIECE OF NEWS TO THE MEETING.

I HATE TO PUT IT LIKE THIS...

GO AHEAD.

I DO.

HE'S GOT A POINT. WE JUST HAD A MEETING YESTERDAY.

. . . . . .

BUT I DON'T SEE THE POINT IN TRYING TO HOLD A MEETING WHEN WE DON'T HAVE ANY NEWS.

THEN WHAT ARE WE DOING HERE?! LET'S JUST GO HOME!

I FEEL THE SAME WAY.

TRUTH BE TOLD...

THESE MEETINGS ARE THE ONE THING THAT GIVES US A SENSE OF UNITY.

HOWEVER, I ALSO FEEL THAT IF WE DO AWAY WITH OUR MEETINGS, WE'LL START TO GO OUR SEPARATE WAYS.

YEAH, BUT WE'RE **BADASSES**. WHAT'S WRONG WITH US BEING OUT ON OUR OWN?

IT'S TRUE, THOUGH. IF IT WEREN'T FOR THESE MEETINGS, I THINK I'D FORGET ABOUT YOU GUYS ALTOGETHER.

IF THIS IS ALL THAT'S KEEPING US TOGETHER, THAT'S KIND OF SAD.

*ON FACE: "MEETING."

BUT WE'VE BEEN DOING THIS SINCE DAY ONE! IF WE SUDDENLY STOPPED, NO ONE WOULD KNOW WHO WE WERE!

WHY DON'T WE JUST STOP PUTTING IT ON?

YOU KNOW, YOU'RE RIGHT.

WAIT A MINUTE! IT'S FINE IF ALL FIVE OF US GO WALKING AROUND, BUT IF WE'RE OUT THERE ALL ALONE... DON'T YOU THINK THIS MAKEUP COULD GET A LITTLE EMBARRASSING?

I'M NOT SURE THAT'S THE RIGHT ANALOGY... IN ANY CASE, THE CONSEQUENCES WOULD BE TOO DIRE.

YEAH. IT'D BE LIKE WHEN AN ACTRESS RETIRES, BUT THEN HOLDS A PRESS CONFERENCE TO ANNOUNCE HER COMEBACK.

IT WOULD BE TOO AWKWARD TO INTRODUCE OURSELVES ALL OVER AGAIN. NO, THE MAKEUP HAS TO STAY.

THAT'S ONE HELL OF A PRICE TO PAY FOR BEING A MEMBER!

NONE OF US CAN EVER LEAVE THE GROUP.

PUT ANOTHER WAY...

GO AHEAD, NOCHI.

FINE, I'LL GO FIRST.

THIS ISN'T THE KIND OF STUFF YOU CAN FORCE YOURSELF TO REMEMBER, THOUGH.

WHICH IS EXACTLY WHY WE NEED TO COME UP WITH SOME MORE NEWS! THERE HAS TO BE **SOMETHING**! AT THIS RATE, EVEN COOKING TIPS WOULD BE WELCOME.

I SURE DO. YESTERDAY'S MEETING RAN FOR FIVE HOURS. IT WAS PAST 10:00 BY THE TIME I GOT HOME!

We've already spent 20 minutes on this alone!

DON'T YOU THINK OUR MEETINGS HAVE BEEN PRETTY LONG LATELY?

BASIC-ALLY...

THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE I'D LIKE TO ADD.

BUT IT'S THE LENGTH OF OUR MEETINGS THAT'S CAUSING US TO RUN OUT OF NEWS. IN A WAY, THAT MAKES THIS A PRETTY IMPORTANT TOPIC.

THIS IS NEWS? AREN'T YOU SIMPLY CRITICIZING OUR MEETINGS?

TO BE HONEST, I COULDN'T EVEN CONCENTRATE ON THE MEETING. ALL I COULD THINK ABOUT WAS HOW HUNGRY I WAS.

HUH?

ABOUT HALFWAY THROUGH YESTER-DAY'S MEETING, I GOT **REALLY** HUNGRY.

SO **EVERYONE** WAS HUNGRY? SOMEONE SHOULD HAVE SAID SOMETHING! WE COULD HAVE GOTTEN SOMETHING TO EAT!

YOU, TOO?! MAN, I WAS STARVING!

WAIT, YOU WERE HUNGRY, TOO?

THEN LET'S DO IT! WE COULD EVEN CONTINUE OUR MEETING ONCE WE'RE AT THE RESTAU-RANT.

THAT'S OUR BOSS FOR YOU!

I HAVE NO PROBLEM PUTTING OUR MEETING ON HOLD SO WE CAN GET SOMETHING TO EAT.

FROM NOW ON, IF ANYONE GETS HUNGRY, HE NEEDS TO SPEAK UP! WE FOUR GREAT ONES NEEDN'T STAND ON CEREMONY!

VERY WELL. LET'S BEGIN.

THE NEXT DAY

WELL, IT'S WHAT WE TALKED ABOUT BEFORE. I'M SORT OF HUNGRY, SO... I WAS WONDERING HOW EVERYONE ELSE IS DOING.

GO AHEAD, NOCHI.

DO YOU MIND IF I ADD SOME-THING FIRST?

HMM, NOT SO MUCH.

HOW ABOUT YOU?

. . . . . .

I WAS PRETTY HUNGRY YESTERDAY, BUT TODAY...I COULD PROBABLY SNACK ON SOMETHING. IF YOU WENT TO EAT, I'D TAG ALONG.

A LITTLE BIT, I GUESS. I DON'T HAVE ANY GREAT URGE TO EAT OR ANYTHING, THOUGH.

WHAT ABOUT THE REST OF YOU? AREN'T YOU HUNGRY TODAY?

STILL, IT'S NOT AS IF I'M ESPECIALLY HUNGRY.

YESTERDAY'S DECREE MADE IT OFFICIAL: IF ONE OF US IS HUNGRY, WE SHOULD ALL GO EAT. KEEPING OUR PROMISES IS WHAT MAKES US MEN.

HE'S GOT A POINT. WE NEED TO CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE THAT MAKES IT EASIER FOR ONE OF US TO SAY "I'M HUNGRY."

YOU SEE?! IT'S REACTIONS LIKE THESE THAT MAKE IT HARD TO BRING UP!

I GUESS I'LL JUST HAVE TO ORDER SOME JUICE OR SOMETHING...

THEN STARTING TOMORROW, ANYONE WHO WISHES TO EAT SHOULD SIMPLY PUT ON A CAP. THAT WILL BE OUR SIGNAL TO INDICATE HUNGER.

THAT'S A GREAT IDEA! IF WE USED A SIGNAL, WE COULD SHOW WE'RE HUNGRY WITHOUT DISRUPTING THE MEETING!

WELL, COMING RIGHT OUT AND SAYING IT CAN BE A LITTLE TRICKY. WHAT IF WE MADE SOME KIND OF SIGNAL INSTEAD?

GOOD THINKING. SO, ANYONE WHO'S HUNGRY SHOULD PUT ON A HAT, AND WE CHOOSE OUR HAT ACCORDING TO WHAT WE WANT TO EAT. AGREED?

WHILE WE'RE AT IT, WHAT DO YOU SAY WE SHOW WHAT WE WANT TO EAT BY THE **KIND** OF HAT WE PUT ON? LIKE, A WOOL CAP COULD MEAN CHINESE FOOD.

YEAH, THAT'S A GOOD PLAN.

VERY WELL. LET'S BEGIN.

THE NEXT DAY

WE GO BY VOTES. IF THE MAJORITY VOTES FOR JAPANESE FOOD, WE EAT JAPANESE. IF THE MAJORITY IS FOR WESTERN, WE EAT WESTERN.

BUT WHAT IF WE WANT TO EAT DIFFERENT THINGS? THEN WHAT?

TODAY'S TOPIC IS POLITICS.

I THINK A BIG PROBLEM IS THAT TOO MANY YOUNGSTERS JUST DON'T PARTICIPATE. THERE AREN'T ENOUGH PEOPLE GOING OUT AND VOTING.

EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE, WE NEED TO STOP AND THINK ABOUT THESE THINGS. DO ANY OF YOU HAVE ANY THOUGHTS ON THE CURRENT STATE OF JAPANESE POLITICS?

ALSO, I DON'T THINK THESE "CELEBRITY POLITICIANS" MAKE MUCH OF A DIFFERENCE IN THE NUMBER OF VOTERS. IF ANYTHING, LETTING CABINET MEMBERS ALSO HAVE CAREERS AS TV PERSONALITIES CAN ATTRACT PEOPLE WHO HAVE NO BUSINESS VOTING!

Western food →

TRUE, A LOT OF YOUNG PEOPLE TEND TO SKIP THE ELECTIONS, BUT YOU SHOULDN'T VOTE JUST FOR VOTING'S SAKE.

ONE HOUR LATER

SEE, THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M SAYING.

BUT DON'T YOU THINK WE HAVE A DUTY TO VOTE?

YOU MAKE A GOOD POINT.

Western food

Curry

I THINK IT'S A LITTLE UNFAIR THAT WE CAN'T VOTE FOR OUR OWN PRIME MINISTER.

Curry

HERE'S MY THING.

SO WHAT EXACTLY IS YOUR CONCERN?

Curry

HE'S RIGHT. AMERICANS GET TO VOTE FOR THEIR LEADER, BUT WE DON'T.

Chinese

SHP

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

ONE MORE HOUR LATER

I WOULDN'T GO THAT FAR. BUT I WILL SAY IT PROBABLY DE-MOTIVATES A LOT OF PEOPLE.

MEANING WHAT? VOTING HERE IS WORTH-LESS?

. . . . . .

Changed his vote to Chinese

Chinese

Curry

!!

Chinese

Chinese

I'D HAVE TO AGREE. THE WAY WE CHOOSE OUR PRIME MINISTER IS PRETTY ROUNDABOUT.

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

IT'S LIKE SAYING, "YOU CAN ELECT WHO YOU WANT TO STUDENT COUNCIL, BUT THEN **THEY** WILL CHOOSE THE PRESIDENT, NOT YOU."

Curry (2nd vote)

SHP

Chinese

Chinese

Curry

Curry

Curry

WHAT ABOUT YOU, BOSS? I THINK WE WOULD ALL BE INTERESTED IN HEARING WHAT YOU THINK.

Curry

YEAH, THAT WOULDN'T EXACTLY MOTIVATE PEOPLE TO GO OUT AND VOTE.

Chinese

Chinese

HOWEVER, THERE ARE SEVERAL NEGATIVE ELEMENTS WITHIN OUR MASSES. I BELIEVE HAVING **EVERYONE** VOTE WOULD ACTUALLY CAUSE A NUMBER OF PROBLEMS.

MANY BLAME THE INDIFFERENCE OF THE YOUNGER GENERATION FOR JAPAN'S CURRENT STATE.

I ALSO THINK THAT IF EVERY CITIZEN SHOWED UP TO VOTE, THERE WOULDN'T BE ENOUGH BALLOTS TO GO AROUND.

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

SHP

Curry

Chinese

!!

. . .

STILL, IT'S NOT AS IF WE'RE ELIGIBLE TO VOTE.

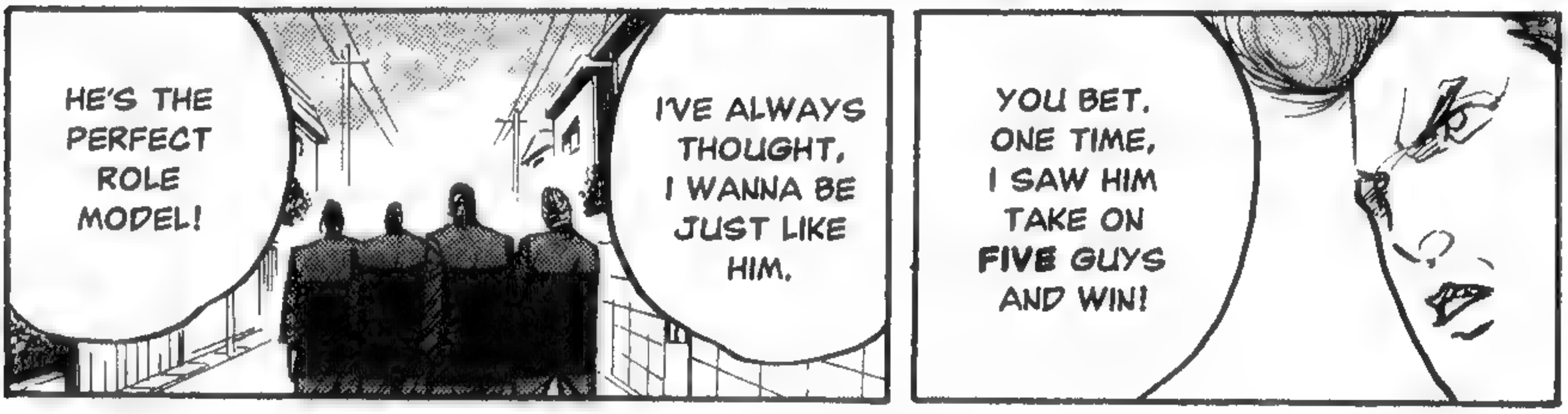
Rice balls

YOU CAN'T JUST PULL SOMETHING OUT AND START EATING LIKE THAT, CAN YOU?!

. . .

LOOKS LIKE IT WAS ALL FOR NOTHING.

CHAPTER 206: **MAN'S MAN'S WORLD**



MAEDA-KUN! IT'S BEEN SUCH A LONG TIME!

HM?

HAVE YOU BEEN DOING ALRIGHT?

HEY, SHIMIZU. IT HAS BEEN A WHILE, HUH?

OH, THAT'S RIGHT. YOU'LL BE MOVING ON TO HIGH SCHOOL NEXT YEAR.

YEAH, BUT JUNIOR HIGH JUST DOESN'T CUT IT. I CAN'T WAIT TO GET INTO HIGH SCHOOL AND START MAKIN' A NAME FOR MYSELF!

IF I HAVE TO GET AN EDUCATION, I MIGHT AS WELL LEARN TO BE THE BEST BADASS I CAN BE. NO BETTER PLACE FOR THAT THAN CROMARTIE!

STILL, I DON'T WANNA GO TO JUST ANY OLD SCHOOL.

BUT WHY?! CROMARTIE'S NUMBER ONE, RIGHT? PLUS, I'D GET TO HANG OUT WITH MY PAL MAEDA-KUN!

I THINK YOU'D DO WELL TO GO SOME-WHERE ELSE.

CROMARTIE, HUH?

HMPH. MAEDA, HUH? CAN'T SAY I'VE HEARD THAT NAME BEFORE.

THAT'S RIGHT! THE MAN'S ON A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT LEVEL THAN US! HE'S SO AWESOME, WE'RE NOT EVEN WORTHY TO STAND NEXT TO HIM! WAHAHA!

HEY, HE LETS YOU CALL HIM MAEDA-KUN?

H-HEY, ASSHOLE! YOU'VE GOT A LOT OF NERVE!

. . .

I'M REALLY SORRY, MAEDA-KUN. HE'S WITH US, BUT HE GOES TO A DIFFERENT SCHOOL. HE'S GOT SORT OF A MOUTH ON HIM.

HEH. SORRY. I GUESS THAT SORTA CAME OUT WRONG.

SEE, IT'S JUST...

WHAT-EVER. I WASN'T REALLY BOTHERED BY IT.

YEAH, THAT WAS WRONG OF ME. I GUESS I'M KINDA WHAT YOU'D CALL "UPPITY." ANYWAY, MY APOLOGIES... MAEDA-KUN.

BUT TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, I AIN'T REALLY HEARD OF NO MAEDA-KUN.

I HEAR A LOT ABOUT TAKENOUCHI, AND YAMAGUCHI OVER AT DESTRADE...

BUT THERE'S GUYS WHO ACT ALL TOUGH JUST 'CUZ THEY GO TO CROMARTIE, RIGHT? THE SCHOOL'S GOT A HELL OF A REPUTATION, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN **EVERYONE** WHO GOES THERE IS A BADASS!

FUKUI! THAT'S ENOUGH, MAN!

THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT.

YOU'RE RIGHT. GOING TO CROMARTIE DOESN'T NECESSARILY MAKE YOU TOUGH.

. . . . . .

SO WHAT ABOUT YOU, MAEDA-KUN? HOW DO YOU STACK UP?

WHAT THE HELL IS IT WITH THIS GUY? WE'VE HEARD ALL THESE STORIES ABOUT HOW TOUGH HE IS, BUT THE TRUTH IS HE'S JUST A CHUMP!

THOMP

THIS IS STUPID. I GOT BETTER THINGS TO DO THAN HANG OUT WITH SOME LOSER. I'VE GOT A DATE THAT'S GONNA KEEP ME BUSY FOR A WHILE. HEH HEH.

. . . . . .

WHY DON'T YOU WATCH WHERE THE HELL YOU'RE GOIN'?!

HEY! THAT HURT, DAMMIT!

OH, NO!

AGH!

WHAT'S THAT YOU'RE BARKIN' ABOUT, LITTLE DOGGY?

I SAY WE INTRODUCE THIS JACKASS TO THE REST OF OUR CREW.

HUH. SUDDENLY YOU DON'T SOUND SO TOUGH. WHAT HAPPENED TO THAT ATTITUDE OF YOURS?

I-I'M SORRY!

SO NOW YOU'RE JUST GONNA RUN INTO SOMEONE AND NOT APOLOGIZE, IS THAT IT?

THIS IS BE-TWEEN YOU AND US, BOY. LET'S GO.

YOUR FRIENDS HAVE GOT NOTHIN' TO DO WITH IT!

UH, I'M WITH SOME FRIENDS, SO...

WHAT DO WE DO?!

THIS IS BAD, MAN! THOSE GUYS ARE YAKUZA!

HUH?!

EXCUSE ME A MOMENT.

BUT HE'S JUST A KID. THERE'S REALLY NO POINT IN TAKING THINGS ANY FURTHER. CAN'T YOU LET HIM GO WITH A WARNING?

OUR BEEF'S WITH THIS GUY HERE. IT'S GOT NOTHIN' TO DO WITH YOU.

WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?!

BWSH

AN ATTITUDE LIKE THAT'S GONNA GET YOU HURT, MY MAN.

HUH. CHECK THIS GUY OUT.

HUH?!

SHP

B-THOMP

WHAT?!

BLGH!

CRACK

HNGH

BWOMP

BWOOSH

YOU'RE DEAD!

SHP

CRACK

?!

LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE'S IN A HURRY TO DIE!

ド" THOMP カ

WHAT THE HELL?!

ド" THOMP カ

ゾ" ナ SNAP

MAEDA!

B-THOMP スター

YOU GOT SOME STONES, I'LL GIVE YOU THAT. BUT YOU GOTTA CHOOSE YOUR FIGHTS, BOY!

DID YOU REALLY THINK YOU COULD TAKE ON ALL FIVE OF US AND WIN?

HNGH...

HUH?

SHP ス"

WHAT?!

BLGH!

SLAP!

WHOEVER HE IS, TAKE HIM DOWN!

WHO THE HELL IS THIS GUY?!

F- FREDDIE!

UGH!

SLAP

SLAP

GRGH!

LET'S SEE HOW HE LIKES A TASTE OF **THIS**!

BWSH

HUH. THIS COULD GET INTER-ESTING.

KUDO-SAN. THIS GUY'S REALLY TOUGH! HE'S SOME KINDA SUPER BADASS!

SLAP!!!

SLAP!!!

GRH!

AGH!

HE TOOK OUT KUDO WITH ONE SLAP!

AH!

SLAP

THANKS, FREDDIE.

GRGH!

SLAP

HUH?!

SHIMI-ZU...

I WAS WRONG, FUKUI.

IT'S OK. HE PROBABLY JUST GOT CONFUSED.

YEAH! I THOUGHT YOU WERE ON OUR SIDE!

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?!

BUT NOT MAEDA-KUN. HE WENT UP AGAINST THE MOB, PUTTIN' HIS LIFE ON THE LINE FOR **ME** OF ALL PEOPLE.

I TALKED TOUGH, BUT WHEN IT CAME DOWN TO IT, I CHICKENED OUT. I GOT SCARED...

MAEDA-KUN!

AS OF TODAY, WHEREVER HE GOES, I FOLLOW.

I'M, LIKE, DEEPLY TOUCHED!

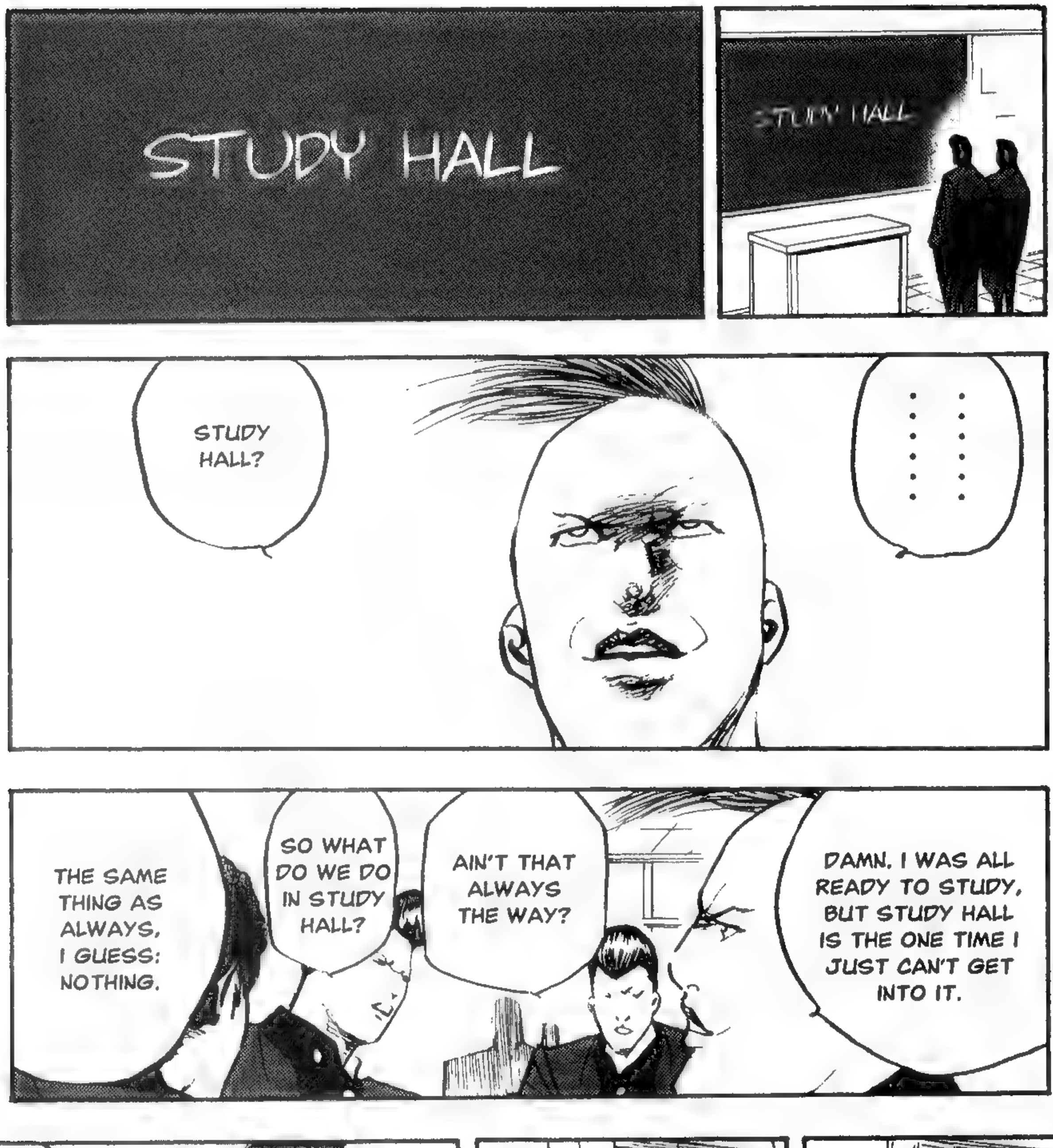
I TOLD YOU HE WAS GREAT, DIDN'T I?!

DAMMIT, THAT'S MY MOM!

WE'RE ALL WITH YOU! JUST TELL US WHAT TO DO AND WE'LL DO IT!

CONGRATULATIONS ON THE FORMATION OF MAEDA'S (MOM'S) ARMY.

CHAPTER 207: **OUT OF CONTROL**



WHY DON'T YOU SHUT THE HELL UP?

AS STUDENTS OF CROMARTIE, WE ALREADY HAVE THE MOST UNFULFILLING OF SCHOOL LIVES. UNLESS WE BECOME MORE PRODUCTIVE, WE'LL AMOUNT TO LITTLE MORE THAN CHATTEL!

I CAN BEAR NO MORE! INSTEAD OF WASTING OUR TIME DOING NOTHING, WHAT DO YOU SAY WE MAKE USE OF IT BY ENGAGING IN CONVERSATION?

NO, PLEASE.

DO YOU MIND IF I GO FIRST?

ANYTHING! POLITICS, ECONOMICS, HORTICULTURE, THE OCCULT... COUNTLESS OTHER TOPICS I'LL REFRAIN FROM MENTIONING.

NO, WAIT. WHAT COULD WE TALK ABOUT TO PASS THE TIME?

HUH?!

NOT REALLY.

I'M SURE YOU'VE ALL FORGOTTEN ABOUT THIS BY NOW, BUT AT ONE POINT WE HAD A BASEBALL TEAM. IT'S BEEN PRETTY MUCH DEAD IN THE WATER FOR A WHILE NOW, BUT WE WENT THROUGH A LOT OF TROUBLE TO GET IT STARTED. I THINK THAT'S WORTH TALKING ABOUT, DON'T YOU?

BUT SPEAKING OF BASEBALL, DON'T YOU THINK THE POLICY REGARDING THE BROADCAST OF LIVE GAMES IS RATHER LACKING?

OH. SOR-RY.

INDEED. "ANYTHING GOES" MAY BE THE POLICY AT OUR SCHOOL, BUT THERE IS A TIME AND PLACE FOR EVERYTHING.

Was that really necessary?

Get a clue.

YEAH! WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE TALKIN' ABOUT STUDY HALL SHIT!

WHAT WAS WRONG WITH MINE?

WHAT A GREAT TOPIC! LET'S TALK ABOUT THIS!

I WAS JUST THINKIN' THE SAME THING!

WHY DO SUCH GAMES ONLY RUN UNTIL 9:30? I THINK THEY SHOULD AIR FOR THE ENTIRETY OF THE MATCH.

IT'S FURTHER PROOF THEY'RE MAKIN' CHUMPS OUTTA THEIR AUDIENCE!

I THINK THOSE MORONS RUNNIN' THE TV STATIONS DON'T KNOW HOW TO COUNT.

I'VE GOT SOMETHIN' TO ADD. WE'VE BEEN TALKIN' ABOUT HOW THEM GAMES ONLY AIR TILL 9:30, BUT REALLY IT'S MORE LIKE 9:23! WHAT THE HECK IS THAT ABOUT?!

WHAT ABOUT PEOPLE LIKE ME, WHO COULDN'T CARE LESS ABOUT BASEBALL? FOR US, ALL THOSE LIVE BROADCASTS DO IS KNOCK OUR DRAMAS AND VARIETY SHOWS OFF THE AIR. WHY, DAMMIT?!

HUH?

I THINK YOUR OPINIONS ARE KINDA ONE-SIDED.

IT IS A MISTAKE FOR A CHANNEL THAT AIRS DRAMAS AND VARIETY SHOWS TO ALSO AIR BASEBALL GAMES. WHAT IS NEEDED IS A SEPARATE CHANNEL DEDICATED SOLELY TO BASEBALL-- A CHANNEL THAT AIRS GAMES ALL YEAR LONG.

THAT WAS FAST!

SO, TO SUMMARIZE EVERYONE'S OPINIONS...

WAIT A MINUTE, THOUGH. WHAT WOULD IT SHOW IN WINTER?

OK! I SAY WE MAKE THAT CHANNEL!

YEAH, THAT'S A GOOD IDEA.

IF WE'RE GOING TO CALL IT A BASEBALL CHANNEL, IT HAS TO SHOW WINTER PROGRAMMING THAT RELATES TO BASEBALL. OTHERWISE, THE VIEWERS WON'T APPROVE.

BUT THEN IT WOULDN'T BE A BASEBALL CHANNEL. IT WOULD BE MORE OF AN ALL-AROUND SPORTS CHANNEL.

WELL, IT COULD AIR SOCCER OR ICE HOCKEY OR SOMETHIN'.

HMM...

HUH. THIS IS GETTIN' KINDA HARD.

YEAH, IT'S WHAT YOU'D FIND IN THOSE BORING SPORTS NEWSPAPERS. WE CAN'T GO COMPROMISIN' OUR INTEGRITY LIKE THAT!

NOR WILL THEY TAKE TOO KINDLY TO FOOTAGE OF PLAYERS DOING FREE TRAINING IN THE OFF-SEASON. THAT SORT OF PROGRAMMING JUST ISN'T COMPELLING.

Y'KNOW, I AIN'T REALLY STOPPED TO THINK ABOUT WINTER BEFORE.

WINTER, HUH?

LET US REMOVE BASEBALL FROM THE EQUATION FOR A MOMENT.

I SUGGEST THAT FOR NOW, WE SIMPLY CONSIDER **WINTER**.

YEAH. I LIKE TO STAY INSIDE WHERE IT'S WARM AND JUST WATCH TV.

I DON'T GO OUT MUCH.

WELL...

HUH.

WHAT DO YOU ALL DO IN WINTER?

BUT EVERYTHING THEY'VE GOT ON NOW IS SO **BORING**! IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT CHANNEL YOU WATCH, IT'S ALL THE SAME!

ONCE IT STARTS GETTIN' COLD, I KINDA LOSE THE URGE TO FIGHT. I JUST WANT TO STAY IN AND WATCH MY SHOWS.

THAT'S RIGHT! WINTER'S ALL ABOUT TV, HUH?

I KNOW. I WISH THEY'D DO SOMETHIN' ABOUT THAT.

BUT THEY ALWAYS CUT THE GAMES OFF RIGHT AT 9:30!

YOU SAID IT. NOTHIN' BEATS KICKING BACK AND WATCHING A BASEBALL GAME.

YEAH, THERE'S A LOT OF BORING SHIT ON THESE DAYS. STILL, SPORTS SHOWS ARE PRETTY COOL.

SO IF THE GAMES JUST RAN TILL WHENEVER, PEOPLE MIGHT CALL IN AND COMPLAIN? WHERE'S THE FRIGGIN MIDDLE GROUND?!

BUT WHAT ABOUT GUYS LIKE ME? I LOOK FORWARD TO MY DRAMA AND VARIETY SHOWS. I'D BE PRETTY UPSET IF THEY KNOCKED 'EM OFF THE AIR SO THEY COULD SHOW THE WHOLE GAME.

YEAH! IT COULD RUN GAMES ALL YEAR LONG. AND IT COULD SHOW THE **WHOLE** GAME AND NOT GET ANY COMPLAINTS. NOT EVEN FROM HAYASHIDA!

THAT'S A GREAT IDEA!

WHOA!

WHAT IF SOMEONE WERE TO MAKE A SEPARATE CHANNEL DEDICATED SOLELY TO BASEBALL?

BUT IT WOULDN'T BE A BASEBALL CHANNEL ANYMORE. IT'D BE MORE OF AN ALL-AROUND SPORTS CHANNEL.

WELL, IT COULD AIR SOCCER OR ICE HOCKEY OR SOMETHING.

OH, YEAH. THEY DON'T HAVE GAMES IN WINTER, HUH?

WAIT A MINUTE, THOUGH. WHAT WOULD IT SHOW IN WINTER?

I SUGGEST WE REMOVE BASEBALL FROM THE EQUATION FOR A MOMENT...

HMM

HUH. THIS IS GETTIN' KINDA HARD.

IT'S GOTTA BE WINTER PROGRAM-MING THAT RELATES TO BASE-BALL.

BUT NOT FOOTAGE OF PLAYERS DOIN' FREE TRAINING IN THE OFF-SEASON. YOU'D LOSE TOO MANY VIEWERS.

IF YOU'RE GONNA CALL IT A BASEBALL CHANNEL, YOU HAVE TO SHOW PROGRAMMING THAT'S ABOUT BASEBALL!

OH, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE!

AND SIMPLY CONSIDER **WINTER.**

WHO HERE IS THE WORST OFFENDER?

CHAPTER 208: **JUST MY IMAGINATION**

SECOND PERIOD IS ALSO STUDY HALL

IT'S PRETTY MUCH DEAD. I GUESS ENOUGH TIME HAS PASSED THAT I CAN TELL YOU THIS, BUT WE'RE NOT EVEN SEEING EACH OTHER ANYMORE.

HEY, WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THAT MARRIAGE THING OF YOURS?

BUT I GOT NOTHIN' TO DO! DOES ANYONE HAVE AN INTERESTING TOPIC?

STUDY HALL **AGAIN?**

IT'S LIKE, NONE OF US CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE CONVERSATION.

YEAH.

MAN. MARRIAGE SURE IS A HARD TOPIC TO TALK ABOUT.

WELL, YOU **ARE** STILL IN HIGH SCHOOL. IT'S NOT LIKE IT'D BE EASY FOR YOU TO JUST GO OFF AND GET MARRIED.

MY OLDER SISTER'S GETTING MARRIED.

ACTUALLY...

UH...

WHAT?!

HUH?

N-NO, MAEDA! THAT'S NOT IT!

WHAT ARE YOU ALL SO SURPRISED ABOUT? IS IT THAT STRANGE THAT MY SISTER'S GETTING MARRIED?

WE'RE SURPRISED THAT YOU **HAVE** AN OLDER SISTER.

SEE, WE'RE NOT SURPRISED THAT YOUR OLDER SISTER'S GETTIN' MARRIED.

NOT SO MUCH PERSONALITY AS, UH...

YOU MEAN, PERSON-ALITY-WISE?

IF YOU DON'T MIND ME ASKIN', IS YOUR SISTER, UH... LIKE YOU?

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

YEAH, I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT.

MAEDA, NO! DON'T LISTEN TO THEM! OR RATHER, WE'D BE BETTER OFF NOT KNOWING THE ANSWER!

MAEDA HAS NO OLDER SISTER! HAVE YOU GOT ME?!

EVERYONE, LISTEN UP! YOU HAVE TO FORGET EVERYTHING YOU JUST HEARD! NO, MORE THAN THAT--YOU HAVE TO ERASE THIS ENTIRE INCIDENT FROM YOUR MEMORIES!

SATEY

WHAT THE HELL'S GOTTEN INTO YOU ALL?

YEAH, I GOTCHA.

WHEN YOU GO TO SLEEP TONIGHT, MAKE SURE THAT THIS DAY IS DEAD TO YOU!

HNGH

HNGH

HNGH

HNGH

HNGH

SO, DID YOU ALL GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP AND FORGET THAT WHICH SHALL NOT BE NAMED?

Coffee

THIS HAS GOT ME SO WOUND UP THAT IT'S ALL I DREAMED ABOUT!

I HAD NIGHTMARES THE WHOLE GODDAMN NIGHT!

I'LL KILL YA!

HOW THE HELL WAS I SUPPOSED TO SLEEP?!

YEAH. STILL, CALLING IT "SCARY" IS KINDA RUDE TO THE GUY SHE'S MARRYING.

BUT KNOWIN' THE ANSWER... IT'S KINDA SCARY, MAN.

THAT SETTLES IT-- WE HAVE TO FIND OUT IF SHE LOOKS LIKE HIM OR NOT, OR WE'LL NEVER SLEEP ANOTHER NIGHT IN OUR FRICKIN' LIVES!

WE ALSO GOTTA CONSIDER THAT SHE MIGHT TAKE AFTER HER DAD.

TRUE. FOR ALL WE KNOW, SHE COULD BE HOT AS HELL.

IF YOU ASK ME, WE'RE LETTIN' OUR IMAGINATIONS RUN WILD. THEY MIGHT LOOK COMPLETELY DIFFERENT.

SORRY, MAN. IT'S JUST, WHEN I TRY TO PICTURE THAT FAMILY... I DON'T KNOW, IT SORTA SEEMS POSSIBLE.

QUIT BEIN' SUCH A FRIGGIN IDIOT AND **THINK** FOR A MINUTE! THE GUY WOULDN'T MARRY HIS OWN SISTER, SO HOW THE HELL COULD THEY LOOK THE SAME?!

BUT WHAT IF HER DAD LOOKS JUST THE SAME?

MAYBE WE SHOULD JUST ASK MAEDA. I THINK THAT'LL GIVE US ENOUGH OF AN IDEA.

SO WE SHOULD GO MEET HIM?

ONCE WE SEE HIS DAD, WE CAN PREPARE OURSELVES BY IMAGINING WHAT HIS SISTER WILL LOOK LIKE.

WE SHOULD FIND OUT WHAT MAEDA'S DAD LOOKS LIKE FIRST. THAT WAY, IT'LL BE LESS OF A SHOCK THAN IF WE SUDDENLY GET A LOOK AT HIS SISTER.

THE NEXT DAY

HEY, MAEDA?

THERE'S SOMETHIN' WE'D LIKE TO ASK YOU.

WOULD YOU SAY YOU LOOK LIKE YOUR DAD?

DAMMIT, THAT **IS** MY DAD!

I KNEW IT! THEY LOOK THE SAME!

IT SEEMS THE DAD ISN'T MUCH FOR TALKING, EITHER.

CHAPTER 209: **DANDY IN THE UNDERWORLD**

SURE ENOUGH. LET'S MOVE.

THERE'S ONE NOW.

SHINJIRO HAYASHIDA
FIRST-YEAR STUDENT AT CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL

WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?

HM?

SKF

SKF

WHAT ARE YOU GOIN' ON ABOUT? WHAT SCHOOL ARE YOU FROM?

WE'RE GONNA KNOCK YOUR ASS SENSELESS, BOY.

LOOKS LIKE WE GOT YOU SURROUNDED. HEH HEH.

YEAH. ANY TIME WE SEE ONE OF YOU CROMARTIE CHUMPS, WE JUMP OUT AND KICK HIS ASS! AND YOU JUST HAPPENED TO WALK UP.

IT'S NOT LIKE WE GOT A BEEF AGAINST YA OR NOTHIN'. WE'RE JUST DOIN' A LITTLE CROMARTIE HUNTING.

I DON'T CARE HOW MANY OF YOU THERE ARE, IT WON'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT YOU'RE A BUNCH OF CANDY-ASS BITCHES! YOU SHOULD REMEMBER THAT... OR ARE YOU SO FRIGGIN DUMB THAT I'VE GOTTA BEAT IT INTO YOU?

"CROMARTIE HUNTING"? YOU GUYS ARE IDIOTS, YOU KNOW THAT? LOOK AT YOU, ALL HAPPY 'CUZ IT'S THREE AGAINST ONE.

SHP

I'M GONNA ENJOY THIS.

HEH. THIS ONE'S GOT SOME SPUNK.

WHOOPS.

BWOOSH

!!

SLIP

AH!!

IS THAT ALL YOU'VE GOT? YOU COULD THROW THAT PUNCH A HUNDRED TIMES AND YOU'D **STILL** NEVER HIT ME! WHY DON'T YOU COME BACK ONCE YOU'VE BEEN IN A FIGHT OR TWO, BOY?

HUH?!

BWSH

AAAAGH!

AH!

FWOOSH

AAGH!

CONSTRUCTION

HUH?!

AH!

WAAAAGH!

FWOOO

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "WHAT DO WE DO?" THE GUY'S **GONE**!

WHAT DO WE DO?

THIS IS BAD, MAN!

HE FELL DOWN A GODDAMN MANHOLE!

AT LEAST NO ONE SAW US. THE ONLY THING WE CAN DO IS RUN FOR IT BEFORE THIS GETS ANY WORSE.

H-HEY, DAMMIT! WHY'D YOU HAVE TO GO AND SAY SOMETHIN' SCARY LIKE THAT?!

YEAH. HE'S PROBABLY DEAD.

HEY! WAIT FOR ME!

LET'S RUN FOR IT!

YOU'RE RIGHT.

YEAH.

NONE OF US IS TO SPEAK OF THIS AGAIN! YOU HEAR ME?

SSSH

FWOOO

SPLSH ピチャン

SPLSH ピチャン

HNGH

LIGHT! WHERE'S IT COMING FROM?

CHK!

HUH?

MY HEAD FEELS LIKE IT'S GONNA BURST.

!!

WHO ARE YOU?

AN APE!

OF COURSE.

I-IT SPOKE!

WHAT?!

THIS IS THE LAND OF THE APES.

WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

YES.

THE LAND OF THE APES?!

SHALL I AWAKEN YOU?

I MUST BE HAVIN' A BAD DREAM. C'MON, WAKE UP!

!!

K-CHAK

HUH?

NOT YET. WE STILL DON'T KNOW IF YOU ARE FRIEND OR FOE. FOR NOW, WE WAIT AND SEE.

ARE YOU GONNA KILL ME?

SSSH

I'M COMPLETELY LOST!

WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON HERE?!

?!

SHP

UH...

YOU MUST BE HUNGRY. HERE, EAT.

NO, I...

HA! NOT TO WORRY. IT'S NOT POISONED.

. . . .

♩

HA HA! THERE'S NOTHING TO THANK ME FOR. IT'S JUST A SOUP MADE FROM LEFTOVERS. I'VE BEEN ASSIGNED TO BE YOUR HANDLER.

♩ TNK

THANK YOU. IT'S DELI-CIOUS.

SLRP

. . . .

WHO ARE YOU PEOPLE? WHERE AM I?

I FEEL LIKE I CAN TRUST YOU.

ME?

WHO ARE **YOU**? WHERE DID YOU COME FROM?

IS IT NOT CUSTOMARY TO OFFER SOMETHING OF YOURSELF BEFORE ASKING OF OTHERS?

IT WOULD SEEM YOU HAVE PARTIAL AMNESIA. YOU'VE PROBABLY SUSTAINED A HEAD WOUND.

I-I CAN'T REMEMBER! WHY?! THE MORE I THINK ABOUT IT, THE MORE MY HEAD HURTS! HNGH...

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

THOUGH YOU MAY NOT LIKE THE ANSWER.

AS FOR WHO WE ARE AND WHAT THIS PLACE IS, YOU'LL FIND OUT SOON ENOUGH.

I'M COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM THE REST OF YOU. DOESN'T IT FREAK YOU OUT TO SUDDENLY SEE A HUMAN?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

DOESN'T IT FRIGHTEN YOU TO LOOK AT ME?

. . . . . .

YOU ARE NOT THE FIRST HUMAN I'VE SEEN.

THE TRUTH IS...

I'M NOT?! DOES THAT MEAN...

I...

WHAT?

COULD IT BE SO DARK FOR YOU THAT YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED?

PLEASE! LET ME SEE HIM!

THAT'S RIGHT.

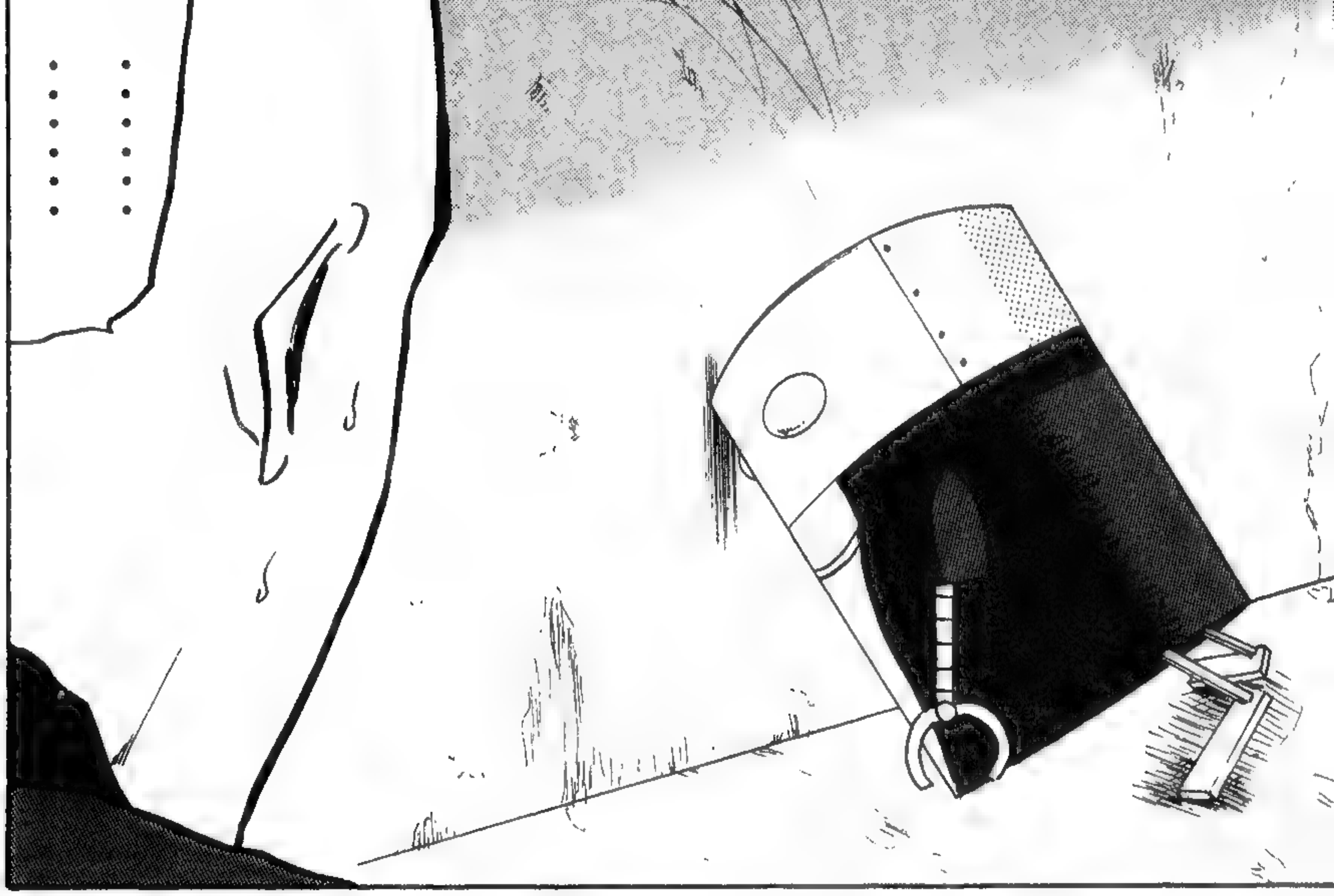
THERE'S ANOTHER HUMAN HERE SOME-WHERE?

BEHIND ME?

LOOK THERE. HE'S RIGHT BEHIND YOU.

.....

.....



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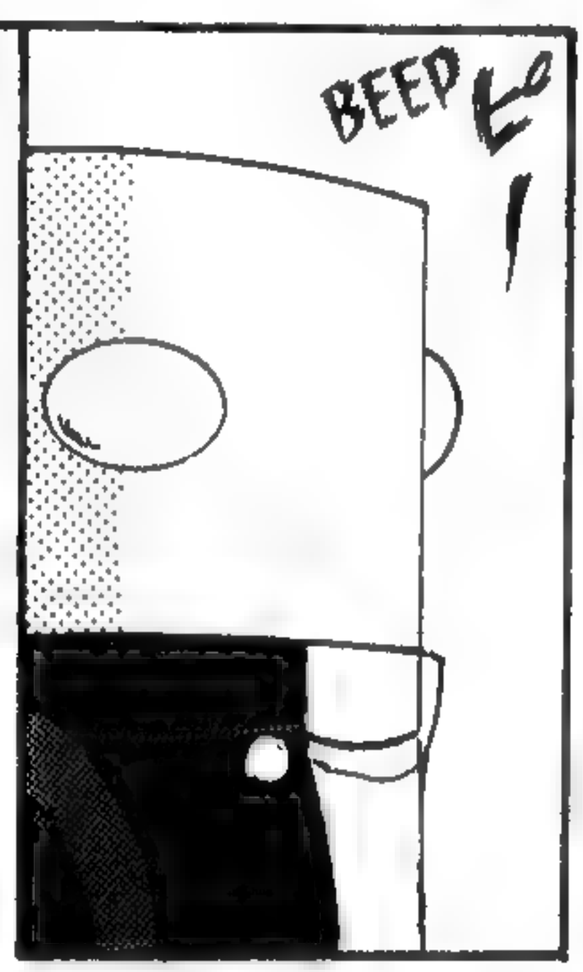
I'LL LEAVE YOU TWO HUMANS TO GET ACQUAINT-ED.

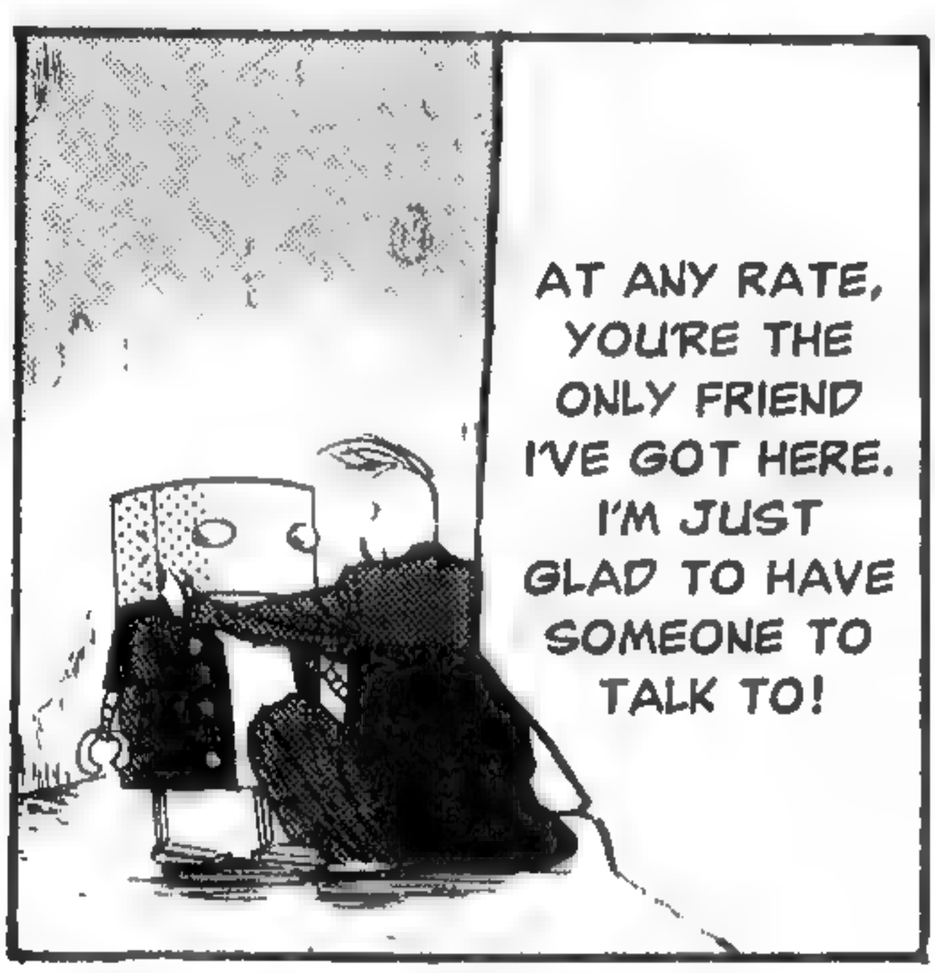
OF COURSE, HE SAID SO HIMSELF.

UH, YOU REALLY THINK THAT GUY'S A HUMAN LIKE ME?

HIS BATTERIES ARE DEAD...

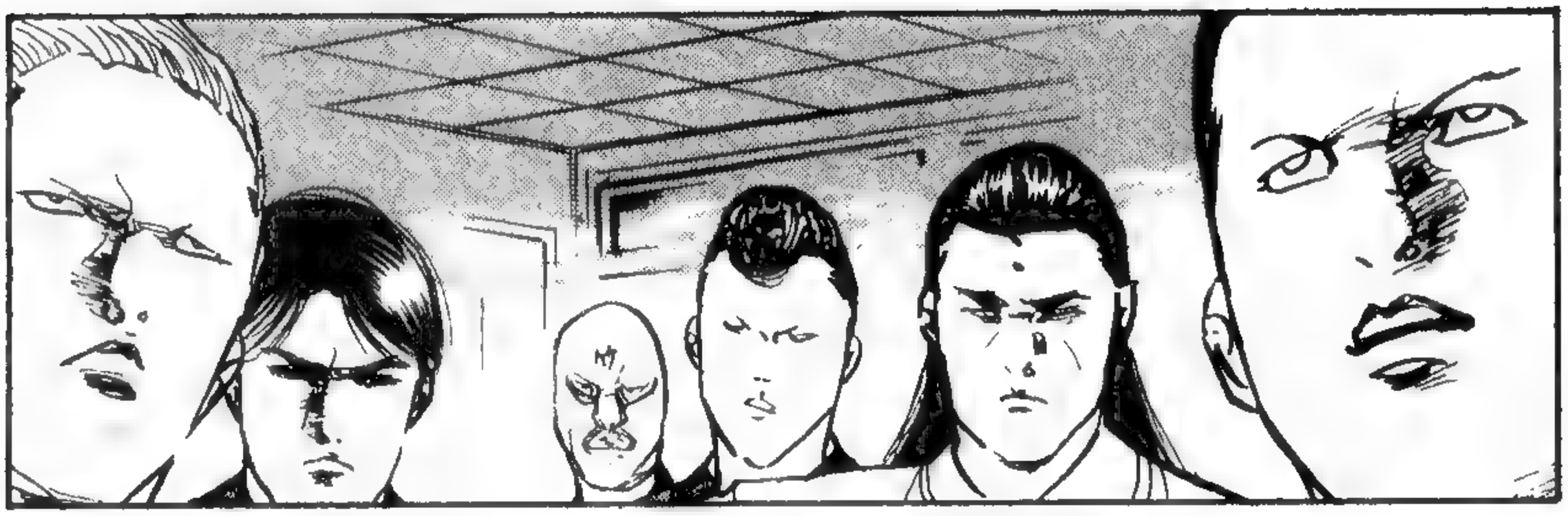
BEEP





AT ANY RATE, YOU'RE THE ONLY FRIEND I'VE GOT HERE. I'M JUST GLAD TO HAVE SOMEONE TO TALK TO!

TO BE CONTINUED? THIS IS GONNA BE CONTINUED, RIGHT?!



UH
WELL, IT'S...

WHAT ARE YOU ALL LOOKING AT ME FOR?
WH- WHAT?

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
HUH?!
WHO ARE YOU AGAIN?

WHO AM I?!
UH...
ME...
QUIT SCREWING AROUND ALREADY! IT'S ME!

A DREAM, HUH?

BWSH

COULD THEY BE MY FRIENDS? PEOPLE I KNEW FROM BEFORE I LOST MY MEMORY?

BUT WHO WERE THOSE GUYS?

SQUEAK

I DON'T REMEMBER! I CAN'T REMEMBER A SINGLE THING!

DAMN, IT'S NO GOOD!

OH, YEAH. THAT WAS A DREAM...

IT'S TIME FOR YOUR TRIAL.

ON YOUR FEET.

CHAPTER 210: MONKEY BUSINESS

BUT THIS IS REALITY!

CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL
INCREDIBLY LONG MOVIE-LIKE SPECIAL

HAYASHIDA AND THE SUBTERRANEAN EMPIRE OF THE APES

. . . .

THIS COURT IS NOW IN SESSION.

OR-DER!

CLACK

CLACK

YES.

DO YOU UNDER-STAND?

BE AWARE THAT YOU HAVE THE RIGHT OF SILENCE. IF ANSWERING A QUESTION IS NOT TO YOUR ADVANTAGE, YOU NEEDN'T DO SO.

INVOKING YOUR RIGHT TO SILENCE, EH? VERY WELL.

I DON'T REMEM-BER.

THEN LET US PROCEED. FIRST, WHAT IS YOUR NAME?

AH. INVOKING YOUR RIGHT AGAIN.

I DON'T REMEM-BER.

WHY HAVE YOU COME HERE? WHAT IS YOUR OBJECTIVE?

AMNESIA? WHY WAS I NOT TOLD ABOUT THIS EARLIER?!

NO, YOUR HONOR! THIS ISN'T THE RIGHT OF SILENCE--THIS FELLOW APPEARS TO HAVE PARTIAL AMNESIA.

CLACK

HE CANNOT BE TRIED IN THIS CONDITION. I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO DECLARE THIS COURT ADJOURNED.

YES, SIR.

PROCEEDINGS SHALL RESUME AT 3:00 THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW. IF HE IS NOT CURED OF HIS AMNESIA BY THEN, HE SHALL REMAIN IMPRISONED UNTIL SUCH TIME AS HIS MEMORY HAS RETURNED.

DON'T I GET A LAWYER?

HM?

THERE'S SOMETHING I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU.

HARSHLY PUT, BUT PROBABLY NOT FAR FROM THE TRUTH.

I GET IT. IN THIS WORLD, I'M LITTLE BETTER THAN A COCKROACH, HUH?

IF YOU WERE AN APE, YES. BUT AS YOU ARE NOT, YOUR RIGHT TO COUNSEL ISN'T RECOGNIZED.

ANY LAND, ANY REALM IS GOING TO HAVE ITS OWN SET OF RULES-- AND LIKE IT OR NOT, THOSE RULES MUST BE OBEYED.

AFTER ALL, THAT IS THE WAY OF THE WORLD.

I MEAN, I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER WHAT KIND OF PLACE I'M FROM...

MAYBE.

FOR EXAMPLE, IF I WERE IN YOUR WORLD, ISN'T IT POSSIBLE THAT I WOULD BE TREATED LITTLE BETTER THAN A COCKROACH?

YOU SEE? SUCH THINGS ARE UNFORTUNATE BUT CANNOT BE HELPED.

BUT IF SOME APE WERE TO JUST WALK ONTO SCHOOL GROUNDS, I'M PRETTY SURE PEOPLE WOULD GET FREAKED OUT ABOUT IT.

YEAH...

EVEN IF UNCONSCIOUSLY, ALL BEINGS SEEK SECURITY BY PLACING THEMSELVES IN A BETTER POSITION THAN THEIR PEERS.

DISCRIM-INATION IS THE WAY OF THE WORLD.

HA HA! AN INTERESTING PROSPECT, BUT AN IMPOSSIBLE ONE. THAT SORT OF WORLD IS A DREAM-- A FAIRY TALE.

YOU'RE RIGHT. STILL, IT'D BE NICE IF MONKEYS AND GORILLAS AND HUMANS COULD ALL LIVE TOGETHER AS ONE.

INDEED.

YEAH. I GUESS I CAN'T REALLY IMAGINE A WORLD WHERE THERE'D BE A GORILLA SITTING THERE NEXT TO ME.

. . . . . .

HM?

I'LL BE RIGHT THERE.

HEY, B.W.! LET'S GO EAT!

AH. YOU DON'T REMEMBER YOUR OWN NAME, DO YOU?

HEH. NO, IT'S JUST A NICKNAME. I'M QUITE FOND OF READING, SO I'VE COME TO BE CALLED B.W. IT'S SHORT FOR "BOOKWORM."

YOUR NAME IS B.W.?

LET'S SEE... HOW ABOUT "KEITZ"?

HUH?

OH! WHY DON'T I GIVE YOU A NAME TO USE IN THE MEANTIME?

THAT WORD HAS A LONG HISTORY IN OUR WORLD. IT MEANS, "THE LIGHT OF HOPE." I'M SURE THAT ONE DAY YOUR MEMORY WILL RETURN.

THAT'S A GOOD NAME. THANKS, B.W.

KEITZ?

ISN'T THERE ANYTHING YOU CAN RECALL? EVEN THE SMALLEST THING COULD PROVE THE KEY TO GETTING YOUR MEMORIES BACK.

I'M STARTIN' TO WONDER. I'M NOT SO CONFIDENT ANYMORE.

HM?

WHY IS THE SKY SO DARK HERE?

. . .

SUN?

DON'T YOU GUYS HAVE A SUN?

I GET THE FEELING THAT THE SKY IN MY WORLD IS A LOT BRIGHTER.

HMM. I DON'T THINK WE HAVE ANYTHING LIKE THAT HERE. I'M STARTING TO WONDER JUST WHAT SORT OF PLACE YOU COME FROM, KEITZ.

YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT THE SUN IS? IT'S...WELL, IT'S SORT OF A BIG, ROUND THING.

WHAT DOES THIS WORD MEAN?

HUH?! ARE YOU TELLIN' ME YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE SCHOOLS HERE?

WHAT IS THIS "SCHOOL" YOU MENTIONED EARLIER?

AH. THERE'S SOME-THING I'D LIKE TO ASK.

WITHOUT TEACHERS TO GIVE US KNOWLEDGE AND HELP US LEARN ABOUT SOCIETY'S RULES AND STUFF, WE'D NEVER MAKE IT THROUGH LIFE!

SCHOOL IS WHERE EVERYONE GETS TO-GETHER AND STUDIES.

WHY?!

BUT WHY IS SUCH A PLACE NECESSARY?

KNOWLEDGE IS EVERYWHERE, IN ALL THINGS THAT ARE SEEN. AND WE MONKEYS LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER, SO EVERYONE IS A TEACHER. IS THAT NOT ENOUGH?

YES. WHY MUST ONE ATTEND SCHOOL IN ORDER TO LEARN?

ABILITIES DIFFER ACCORDING TO THE INDIVIDUAL, SO ALL STUDENTS WILL LEARN AT THEIR OWN PACES, YES?

ALSO, WHY MUST YOU GATHER TOGETHER TO STUDY?

IT'S NOTHING FOR YOU TO SOUND APOLOGETIC ABOUT. BESIDES, I COULD JUST AS EASILY BE MISTAKEN.

Y'KNOW, WHEN YOU PUT IT LIKE THAT, YOU MAKE A LOT OF SENSE. THERE'S PROBABLY A LOT OF USELESS STUFF IN MY WORLD...

YOU MUST BE BORED HAVING NOTHING TO DO.

?

DIARY

OH, THAT'S RIGHT! THIS IS FOR YOU.

THANKS. YOU'RE A GREAT GUY.

DIARY

YOU SHOULD WRITE THE EVENTS OF EACH DAY IN THIS JOURNAL, AND BE HONEST WITH YOUR FEELINGS. DOING SO MAY HELP YOU REDISCOVER THE PERSON YOU ARE.

THAT'S THE SPIRIT. BE SEEING YOU.

DIARY

I'M GONNA USE THIS JOURNAL TO WRITE DOWN EXACTLY HOW I FEEL.

TODAY, B.W. GAVE ME THIS DIARY.

AND HE'S SMART, SO HE'S FUN TO TALK TO. HE EVEN GAVE ME A NAME: KEITZ.

HE'S A REALLY GREAT GUY, SOMEONE I COULD CALL A FRIEND.

THAT TALK WE HAD ABOUT SCHOOL WAS PRETTY SURPRISING, TOO. I REALIZED THERE'S A LOT OF WASTE IN THE WAY WE HUMANS DO THINGS. IN FACT, I THINK HAVING TO GO TO SCHOOL IS THE REASON WE HATE STUDYING SO MUCH.

EVEN THOUGH I'M HUMAN, B.W. DOESN'T TREAT ME ANY DIFFERENT.

I THOUGHT HE MADE A GREAT ARGUMENT.

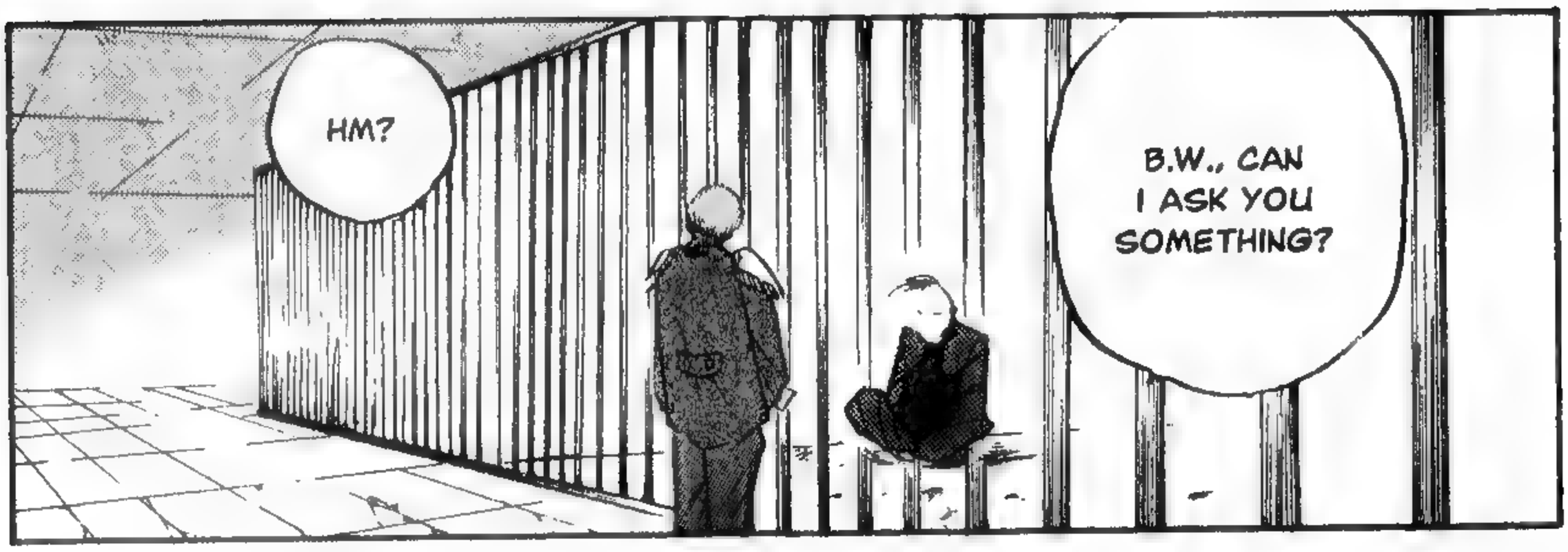
I WAS HONESTLY IMPRESSED.

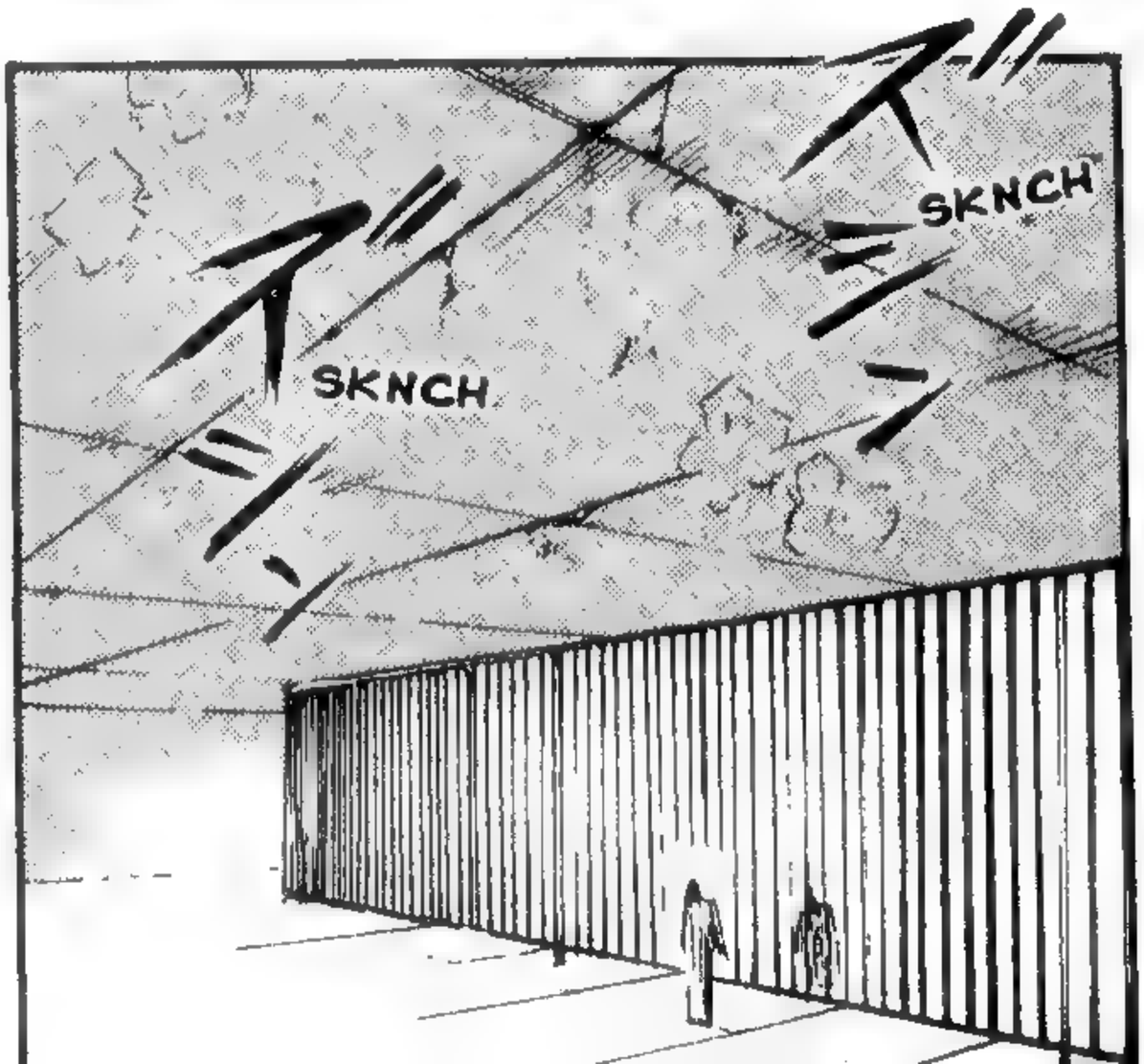
I'D RATHER NOT HAVE HEARD IT FROM SOME DAMN MONKEY.

STILL...

HAYASHIDA, HOW CRUEL! TO BE CONTINUED...

CHAPTER 211: **FUNKY MONKEY BABY**





HUH?

IT'S... THAT GUY.

SKNCH

NO.

IS IT AN EARTH-QUAKE?

SKNCH

"THAT GUY"?

SKRNCH

CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL
INCREDIBLY LONG MOVIE-LIKE SPECIAL

HAYASHIDA AND THE SUBTERRANEAN EMPIRE OF THE APES

BWACK

THMP

F

THMP

THMP

YES.

LORD RIZER! THAT SOUND!

IT JUST PASSED OVERHEAD.

SPK

SPK

IT CAN'T BE HELPED. WE LACK THE STRENGTH TO DEFEAT HIM. IF WE WANT TO STAY ALIVE, WE HAVE TO LAY LOW FOR NOW.

DAMMIT! HOW LONG MUST WE LIVE IN FEAR, TREMBLING AT THE SHADOW OF **THAT GUY**?!

IT STOPPED. DO YOU THINK IT'S OVER?

NO.

LET US GO TO THE MOUNTAIN!

LORD RIZER!

DO YOU WISH OUR PEOPLE TO BE REVISITED BY THE NIGHTMARE WRITTEN OF IN THE ANCIENT TEXT?! NO, NO ONE IS TO GO NEAR THAT MOUNTAIN WITHOUT MY PERMISSION.

WE ARE NOT YET READY TO CHALLENGE HIM.

I HAPPENED TO OVERHEAR SOMETHING YESTERDAY: IT SEEMS THAT A HUMAN HAS ARRIVED.

HM?

LORD RIZER.

. . . . . .

THAT *GUY*?

UH... WHAT?

I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT IT MYSELF. HE'S JUST "THAT *GUY*."

HE'S A SORT OF LEGENDARY DEMON, SAID TO APPEAR ONCE EVERY 50 YEARS.

NO ONE HAS EVER SEEN HIM.

OPEN IT.

SCUFF

LORD RIZER!

SQUEAK

INSOLENCE! YOU ARE ADDRESSING THE GREAT GENERAL RIZER, HOLY WARRIOR AND RULER OF THIS AREA!

WHO'S THIS GUY SUPPOSED TO BE?

YEAH. WHAT'S IT TO YOU?

HAVE YOU SEEN THAT WHICH IS CALLED "THE SUN"?

ONE WHO KNOWS OF THE SUN WILL FALL FROM THE HEAVENS, AND HE WILL BRING WITH HIM A WIND OF GREAT CHANGE--THE LIGHT OF HOPE AND THE DARKNESS OF OBLIVION.

THE ANCIENT TEXT TELLS US...

EITHER THAT, OR YOU ARE THE PESTILENCE THAT WILL BRING RUIN TO OUR LAND.

THEN YOU WHO HAVE SEEN THE SUN ARE THE KEY TO OUR SALVATION.

IN OTHER WORDS, IF THE ANCIENT TEXT IS CORRECT...

ULTIMATELY, THE MAN THAT YOU BECOME...

I SUPPOSE YOU DON'T KNOW WHICH OF THESE YOU ARE YOURSELF.

LORD RIZER! YOU ARE ADDRESSING THE WRONG MAN!

BEEP

IS UP TO YOU.

. . . . . .

NO MATTER.

AH. SO IT'S THIS ONE, EH?

UH, MOUNTAIN?

I WILL TAKE THIS HUMAN WITH ME TO THE MOUNTAIN.

IT BEGINS NOW.

THE ANCIENT TEXT SAYS THAT ONLY THE SAVIOR AND THE CHOSEN WARRIOR MAY ENTER THE MOUNTAIN. IN OTHER WORDS...

NO.

WE WILL GO WITH YOU!

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

NO ONE BUT MYSELF AND THE HUMAN MAY PASS.

YOU WON'T REFUSE.

WHAT IF I SAY I DON'T WANT TO GO TO THE MOUNTAIN?

I THINK YOU'RE GETTIN' A LITTLE AHEAD OF YOURSELF.

YOU WILL UNDERSTAND WHY SOON ENOUGH.

HUH?

OR, RATHER, YOU ARE UNABLE TO REFUSE.

KEITZ...

WE WILL NOW HEAD FOR THE MOUNTAIN. THE PATH IS TREACHEROUS. PREPARE YOURSELF.

I DIDN'T THINK SO.

NO SIGNAL

IT'S PROBABLY NO GOOD, BUT...

YOU KNOW ABOUT CELL PHONES?

HUH?

AH. WOULD THAT BE A CELLULAR TELEPHONE? YOU'LL FIND IT WON'T WORK HERE.

SUCH THINGS ARE WRITTEN OF IN THE TEXT. IN OTHER WORDS, THEY ARE THE THINGS OF OUR PAST.

AS THE CHOSEN WARRIOR, I HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO READ THE ANCIENT TEXT.

OF COURSE, ANY CULTURE FOOLISH ENOUGH TO BECOME ABSORBED IN ITS OWN PROGRESS WOULD FAIL TO SEE THIS.

A CIVILIZATION THAT ADVANCES TOO FAR WILL DESTROY ITS OWN PEOPLE--THAT IS WHAT OUR FOREFATHERS TAUGHT US.

DO MY WORDS STRIKE CLOSE TO HOME?

YOU'RE CHOOSING **NOW** TO START GIVING LECTURES?

FORGET IT! I AIN'T GOIN'!

YOU HUMANS ARE RATHER WEAK, AREN'T YOU? IN ANY CASE, KEEP YOUR SPIRITS UP. WE ARE ALMOST THERE.

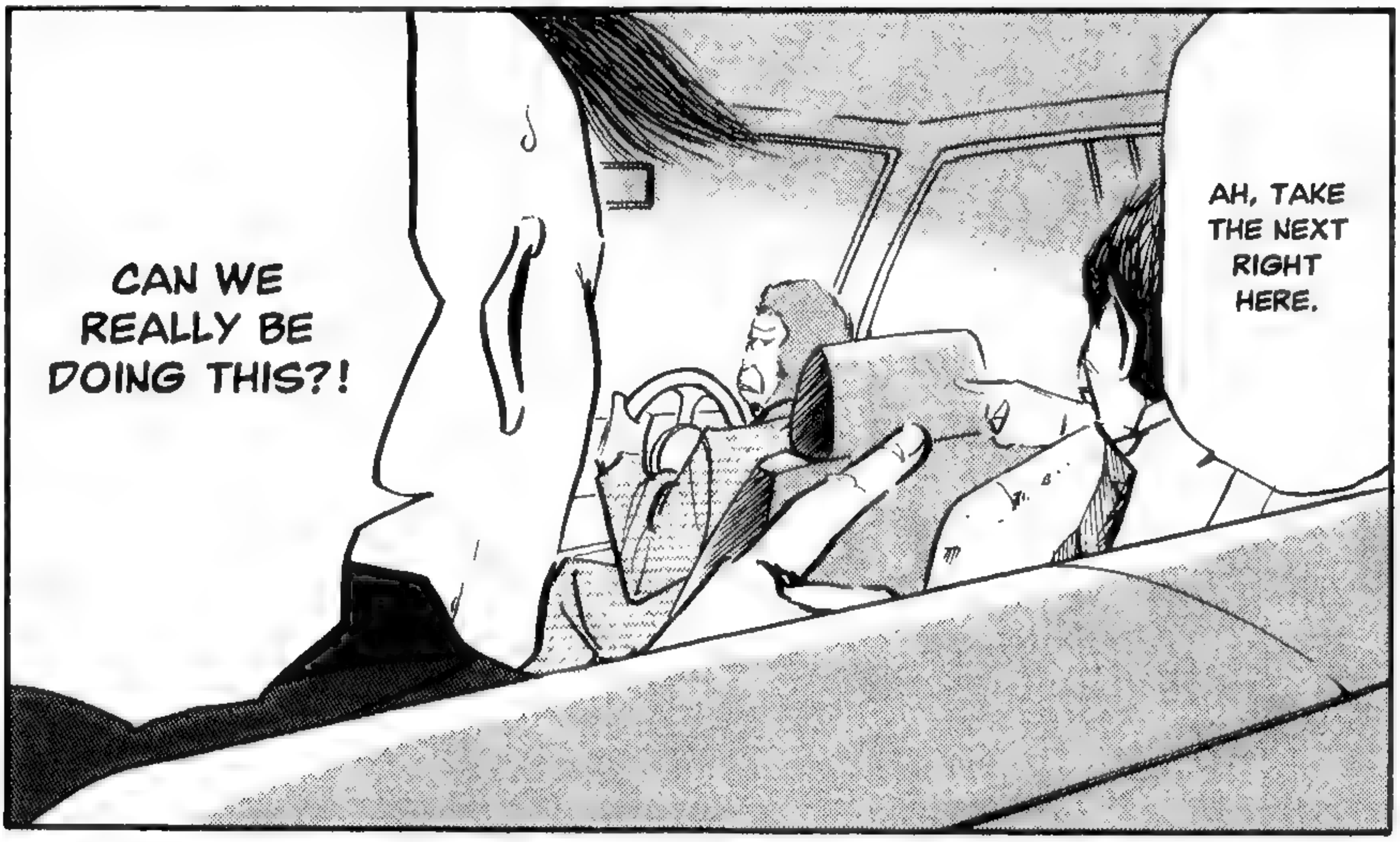
H-HOW THE HELL LONG DO YOU PLAN TO MAKE ME WALK?! I'M SO TIRED I CAN'T TAKE ANOTHER STEP!

AND JUST HOW DO YOU PLAN ON MAKING THAT HAPPEN?!

EVEN IF YOU'RE UNABLE TO WALK, YOU **WILL** MAKE IT TO THE MOUNTAIN! I SWEAR IT AS A WARRIOR!

I'M TELLIN' YOU, I CAN'T WALK ANY MORE!

IF YOU DON'T GO, THIS IS ALL FOR NOTHING. YOU MUST GO.



THAT DRIVER IS AWESOME! MORE TO THE POINT, THIS STORY IS *STILL* TO BE CONTINUED?!

YES. MOUNT POPLOKIS.

IS THAT IT?

. . . . . .

BURIED DEEP WITHIN THAT MOUNTAIN LIES THE SWORD OF LIGHTNING.

THE SWORD OF LIGHTNING?

CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL
INCREDIBLY LONG MOVIE-LIKE SPECIAL

HAYASHIDA AND THE SUBTERRANEAN EMPIRE OF THE APES

CHAPTER 212: **THEME FROM THE MONKEYS**

AT THIS RATE, WE ARE SURE TO BE DESTROYED. BUT IF WE HAD THE SWORD OF LIGHTNING...

THAT GUY IS A TRULY FEARSOME OPPONENT. WE ARE POWERLESS AGAINST HIM.

WE HAVE NO WAY OF KNOWING. WE DON'T EVEN KNOW HIS NAME, WHICH IS WHY WE CALL HIM "THAT GUY." ALL WE CAN SAY IS THAT HE IS A DEMON THAT APPEARS ONCE EVERY 50 YEARS.

SAY, RIZER-SAN? WHO EXACTLY IS, UH, THAT GUY?

I'M SURE YOU'VE HEARD THE RUMBLINGS IN THE EARTH. IT IS A SIGN THAT THAT GUY WILL SOON APPEAR.

AND ACCORDING TO THE ANCIENT TEXT, THIS IS YEAR 50.

BUT TO DO THAT, I HAVE TO FIGHT SOME KIND OF MONSTER.

I GET IT. AND BECAUSE I KNOW ABOUT THE SUN, I'M THE GUY WHO'LL SAVE YOUR WORLD.

WE HAVE LIVED IN FEAR THESE PAST MONTHS.

YES. THE TEXT'S TEACHINGS FORM THE BASIS OF OUR WAY OF LIFE.

YOU REALLY BELIEVE THAT? THAT'S HOW MUCH FAITH YOU HAVE IN THIS ANCIENT TEXT OF YOURS?

WAIT, YOU'RE ALSO SAYING YOU BELIEVE I'M THE ONE WHO'LL SAVE YOU, RIGHT? BUT WHAT IF I'M NOT? WHAT DO YOU PLAN ON DOING THEN?

BUT HOW MUCH TRUST CAN YOU PUT IN SOMETHING THAT OLD? I JUST DON'T GET IT.

THE ONLY THING WE **CAN** DO: DIE.

I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS CRAP!

WE SHOULD BOTH BE PREPARED TO DIE.

AND NOW YOU'RE SAYING I GOTTA DIE FOR YOU GUYS?! THERE'S NOT EVEN A SINGLE HUMAN HERE WHO'LL MISS ME WHEN I'M GONE!

I WAKE UP IN THIS CRAZY, UPSIDE-DOWN WORLD WITH MOST OF MY MEMORY GONE...

MORE TO THE POINT, IF YOUR PLAN IS TO RETURN TO YOUR WORLD, HOW DO YOU INTEND ON DOING SO? DO YOU KNOW THE WAY BACK?

AND WHAT WILL YOU DO THEN?

SCREW THE MOUNTAIN! I'M GOIN' BACK.

AS I SAID BEFORE, YOU **WILL** GO TO THE MOUNTAIN. I WILL NOW TELL YOU THE REASON WHY.

NGHR

IN OTHER WORDS, ONCE YOU'VE DEFEATED THAT GUY, A PATHWAY WILL OPEN UP BACK TO YOUR WORLD. THUS, YOU MUST DEFEAT THAT GUY IF YOU EVER WISH TO RETURN. TO PUT IT RATHER LESS DELICATELY...

THE ANCIENT TEXT STATES, "WHEN THE SAVIOR RIDS THE WORLD OF ITS CALAMITY, A PORTAL WILL OPEN UP TO THE HEAVENS."

BELIEVE IT OR NOT. DO AS YOU PLEASE.

THE WAY BACK HOME WILL JUST MAGICALLY OPEN UP? YOU ACTUALLY EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE THAT?!

GIMME A FRICKIN' BREAK!

SO LONG AS THAT GUY DRAWS BREATH, YOU SHALL NEVER BE ABLE TO RETURN.

IT HAS JUST OCCURRED TO ME THAT IF YOU TRULY ARE OUR SAVIOR...

...

HOWEVER, UNLESS YOU KNOW OF AN ALTERNATE WAY HOME, I DON'T SEE THAT YOU HAVE MUCH OF A CHOICE.

...

THEN YOUR COMING HERE IS FATE. WHICH MEANS IT MAY ALSO BE YOUR FATE THAT YOU GO TO THE MOUNTAIN.

YES. AND HERE WE WILL FIND THE KEEPER OF THE SWORD OF LIGHTNING, THE WEAPON THAT WILL DEFEAT THAT GUY.

HUH?! WE ARE?

NOT TO WORRY. WE ARE ALREADY WITHIN THE MOUNTAIN.

IT'S TOO DARK. I CAN'T SEE A THING!

THEN WHAT THE HELL ARE WE EVEN DOING HERE?!

I DON'T KNOW.

THE KEEPER? AND WHERE EXACTLY IS THIS GUY?

NO DOUBT HE IS ALREADY WATCHING US, DETERMINING IF I AM THE CHOSEN WARRIOR AND YOU ARE OUR SAVIOR.

THE KEEPER IS A WISE MAN. HE KNOWS EVERYTHING-- INCLUDING THAT WE ARE ALREADY HERE.

HE MAY HAVE CHANGED HIS SHAPE SO WE WON'T KNOW HIM.

SO HE'S CLOSE BY?

AH. OK.

NO. THIS IS JUST A NORMAL SNAIL.

SO HE COULD BE THIS SNAIL HERE?

HUH?

WAIT. DO YOU NOT SENSE THAT?

ELDER, MAY I ASK YOU A QUESTION?

. . .

YOU ARE?! THAT WAS FAST!

YES. I AM THE KEEPER.

CAN I SAY SOME-THING?

ISN'T THERE USUALLY MORE OF A LEAD-IN BEFORE A MAJOR CHARACTER GETS INTRODUCED? I GET THE FEELING YOU SHOWED UP SORT OF QUICKLY.

. . .

IF YOU'LL PARDON MY ABRUPTNESS, I AM RIZER, A WARRIOR FROM THE VILLAGE AT THE BASE OF THIS MOUNTAIN.

AH. I SEE.

YOUNG MAN, OUR WORLD IS ON THE BRINK OF DESTRUCTION. TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE! THERE ISN'T A MOMENT TO WASTE ON SUCH FRIVOLITIES AS LEAD-IN.

HOWEVER, THE SWORD OF LIGHTNING IS A FEARSOME WEAPON-- ONE FALSE STEP AND IT WILL BRING RUIN TO OUR WORLD. HOLY WARRIOR THOUGH YOU MAY BE, I CANNOT DELIVER IT EVEN UNTO YOU.

OF COURSE. I KNOW ALL AND SEE ALL. I HAVE AWAITED YOUR ARRIVAL.

WE HAVE COME FOR THE SWORD THAT CAN SAVE US.

YES. I WOULD ASK THAT YOU SEE WHETHER OR NOT HE IS OUR SAVIOR.

SO THE FACT YOU'VE BROUGHT THIS YOUNG MAN WITH YOU MEANS...

I KNOW, SIR. THE ONLY ONE THAT MAY HANDLE THE SWORD IS OUR CHOSEN SAVIOR.

YOU KNOW ALREADY?!

YEAH, THAT'S HIM.

SILENCE! THIS CONVERSATION WILL BE THE DEATH OF US! HERE IS THE SWORD.

WHAT MAY NOT BE ENOUGH?

HUH?

I'VE ALREADY TOLD YOU, THERE'S NO TIME TO LOSE! AS IT IS, YOUR ARRIVAL IS SO LATE THAT IT MAY NOT BE ENOUGH.

WASN'T THAT A LITTLE FAST? I GET THE FEELING YOU'RE KIND OF RUSHING THROUGH THIS.

SO THAT MEANS I REALLY AM THE SAVIOR? ME?

YES. AND I DON'T HAVE TO TELL YOU TO BE CAREFUL WITH IT.

THIS IS THE SWORD OF LIGHT-NING?

YOUR MOHAWK.

YEAH, BUT THAT ANCIENT TEXT THING SAID I COULD ALSO BE A GOD OF DESTRUCTION OR SOMETHING. HOW DO YOU KNOW I'M THE SAVIOR?

THE SAVIOR WILL BE ONE WHO KNOWS THE SUN. YOU'VE ALREADY HEARD THIS, YES?

YOU'RE THE FOURTH.

THE TRUTH IS, YOU ARE NOT THE FIRST SAVIOR TO VISIT OUR WORLD.

COME AGAIN?

A-ALL OF THEM?

THE THREE PREVIOUS SAVIORS ALL HAD MOHAWKS.

YES. I HAVE ACTED AS THE SWORD'S KEEPER FOR MORE THAN 300 YEARS, AND HAVE SEEN IT WITH MY OWN EYES.

THE FOURTH?!

THE MOHAWK IS PROOF OF BEING THE SAVIOR...

THAT STRIP OF HAIR REPRESENTS THE SAVIOR'S VERY SOUL!

YES. THE MOHAWK IS PROOF THAT YOU ARE THE SAVIOR.

VRRMM

YES, SIR.

DO YOUR MOHAWK PROUD.

NOW GO.

I'M THE FOURTH SAVIOR. WITH A MOHAWK.

WEAR YOUR MOHAWK WITH PRIDE, FOR IT IS A SIGN OF YOUR VERY DESTINY.

YES, KEITZ. THE KEEPER SPOKE THE TRUTH. AS I THOUGHT, YOU ARE INDEED OUR SAVIOR.

KEITZ.

I'VE GOTTA TELL YA, I'M PRETTY WORN OUT BY ALL THIS. LIKE, PSYCHO-LOGICALLY.

SO THIS MOHAWK ACTUALLY MEANS THAT I'M THE SAVIOR, HUH?

YOU'VE ARRIVED SUDDENLY IN AN UNFAMILIAR WORLD, BURDENED WITH A CRUEL DESTINY.

I AM GRATEFUL FOR YOUR EFFORTS THUS FAR. IT'S ONLY NATURAL THAT YOU FIND YOURSELF WEARY.

HERE. USE THIS KERCHIEF TO WIPE YOURSELF OFF.

I THINK I'LL DO THAT. I AM SWEATING A BIT MORE THAN USUAL.

BUT THE FIRST HURDLE AT LEAST HAS BEEN CLEARED. TAKE A MOMENT TO RELAX.

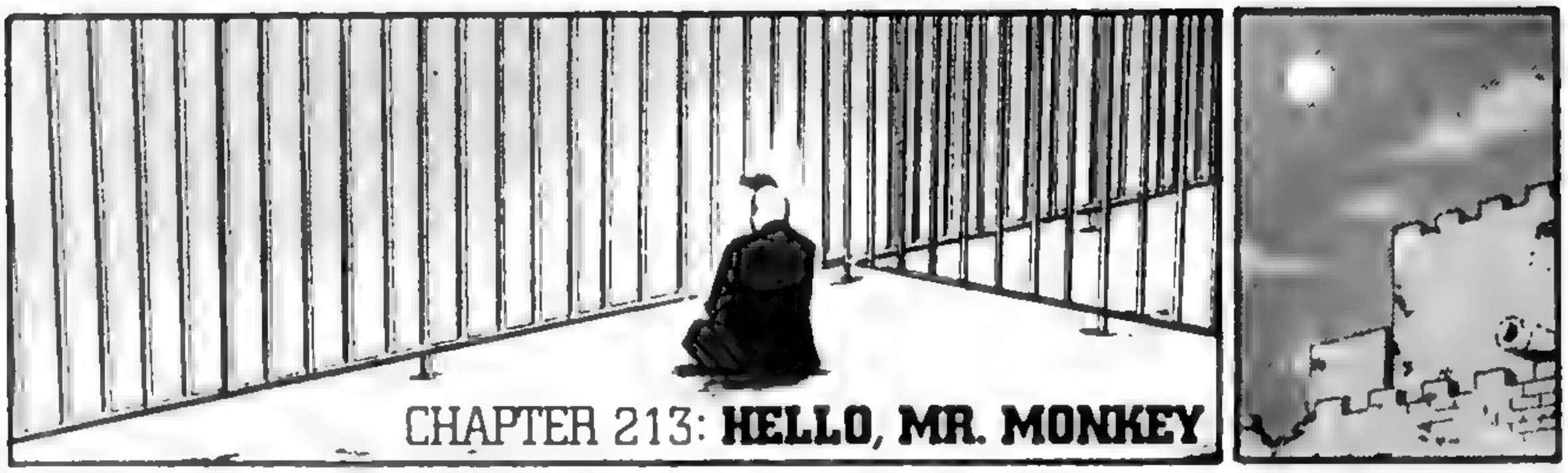
THANKS

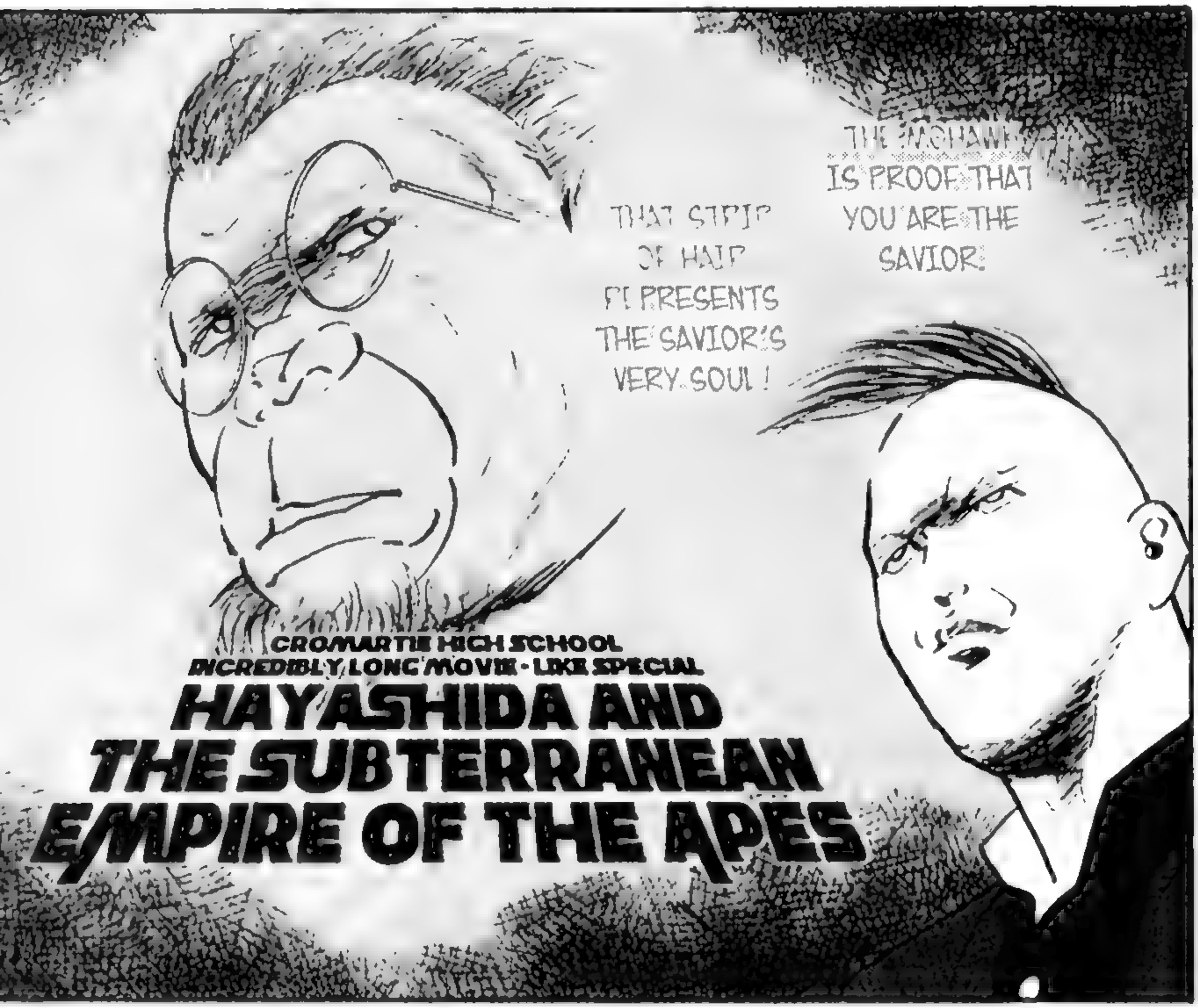
THAT HAIR IS UNDENIABLE PROOF THAT YOU ARE THE SAVIOR!

I CAN'T TELL YOU WHAT A RELIEF IT IS THAT YOU HAVE A MOHAWK.

HUH?

THAT'S RIGHT, HE WEARS A WIG! WAIT, THIS IS *STILL* TO BE CONTINUED?!


CHAPTER 213: HELLO, MR. MONKEY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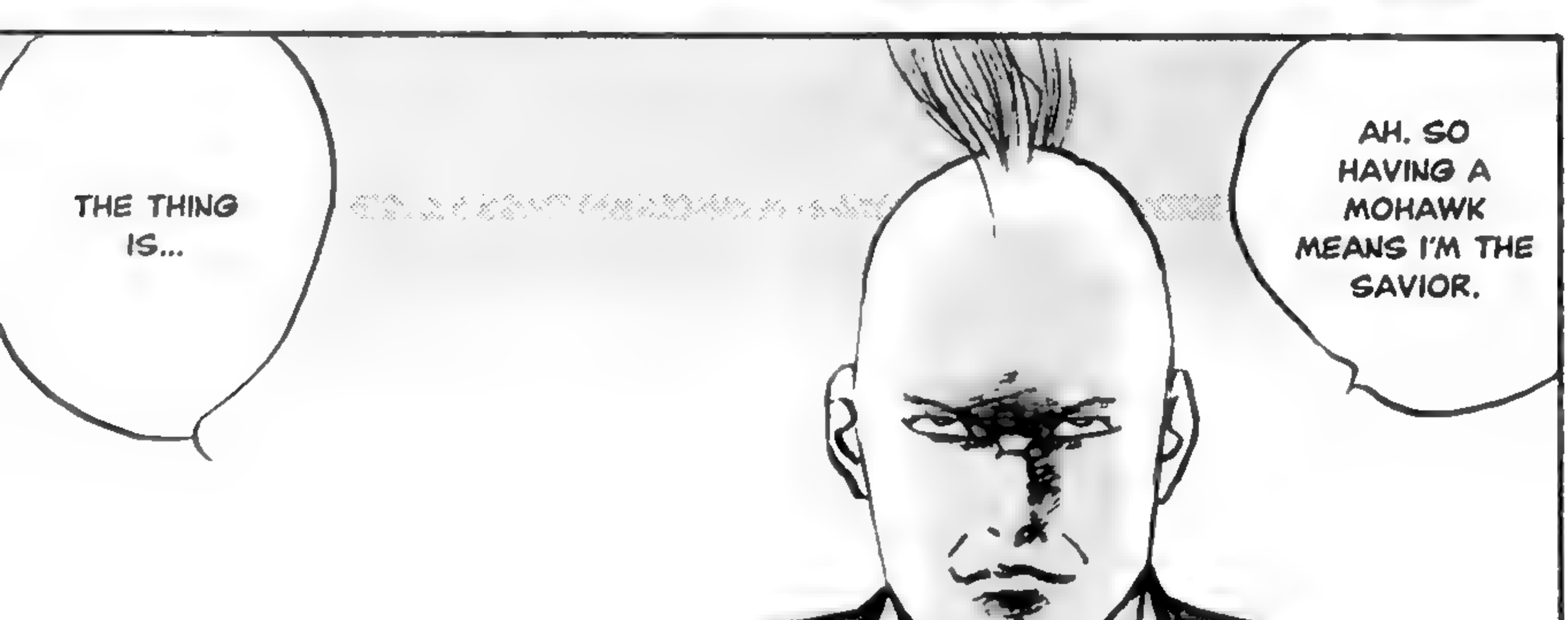

THE THING IS...
AH. SO HAVING A MOHAWK MEANS I'M THE SAVIOR.

IS SOMETHING LIKE THIS REALLY POSSIBLE?

WHY AM I EVEN WEARING THIS THING?!

I WOKE UP HERE WITH MOST OF MY MEMORY GONE. IT NEVER WOULD'VE OCCURRED TO ME THAT MY MOHAWK IS A WIG.

BUT I HAVE HAIR! WHY WOULD I GO OUT OF MY WAY TO LOOK BALDER THAN I REALLY AM?

PEOPLE USUALLY WEAR WIGS TO COVER UP THEIR BALDNESS, RIGHT?

MAYBE I WAS AN ENTERTAINER. I COULD HAVE WORN THIS TO GET LAUGHS!

WHAT KIND OF WORLD HAVE I COME HERE FROM?!

YEAH, I WAS PROBABLY AN ENTER-TAINER.

THE MORE I THINK ABOUT IT...

IT'S ALSO POSSIBLE I WORE THIS TO TRY TO COME ACROSS AS SOME KIND OF BADASS.

TNK

THIS ISN'T THE TIME FOR SUCH THINGS!

STILL, IT DOES ME NO GOOD TO THINK ABOUT IT NOW.

I GUESS I'LL JUST CALL IT A DAY.

HM?

AAH, I HAD A GREAT NIGHT'S SLEEP.

HNH

BEEP

BEEP

IT'S GONE!

HUH?!

WAIT! THINK ABOUT THIS. I PUT IT THERE BEFORE I WENT TO SLEEP, RIGHT?

BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! IT SHOULD BE RIGHT THERE!

BWSH

AGH! WHAT ABOUT THE SWORD OF LIGHTNING?!

THIS HAS GOT ME SO WOUND UP THAT I CAN'T EVEN THINK STRAIGHT!

...

=PHEW=

AT LEAST THE SWORD IS STILL HERE.

I CAN GET BY WITHOUT THE WIG.

WHAT-EVER. THE SWORD IS WHAT'S IMPOR-TANT.

WAIT A MINUTE.

WOULDN'T IT NORMALLY BE **THIS** THAT GOES MISSING?

THE MOHAWK IS PROOF THAT YOU ARE TH SAVIOR

IN A WAY, IT'S MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE SWORD!

AARGH! I AM GOING TO NEED THAT WIG!

KEITZ. IT'S TIME TO AWAKEN.

SCUFF

SCUFF

WHAT BEFELL YOU?

HM?

SHP

SQUEAK

YOU MUST BE CAREFUL. AFTER ALL, YOU ARE OUR SAVIOR.

AH.

NOTHING. I JUST SORT OF HURT MY HEAD.

THE RUMBLINGS IN THE EARTH GROW STRONGER. IT IS A SIGN THAT THAT GUY HAS ONCE AGAIN BEGUN TO MOVE AGAINST US.

UH, WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

. . . .

YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF OUR HOPE.

BY THE WAY...

SURE THING.

TODAY YOU SHOULD REST. WE WILL BEGIN TOMORROW.

I HAD THOUGHT IT TIME WE BEGIN OUR PREPARATIONS, BUT WITH YOUR INJURY, I DON'T WISH TO PUSH YOU BEYOND YOUR LIMITS.

UH, YEAH. ABOUT THAT, I HAVE THE SWORD, BUT...

THAT'S A RELIEF. YOU SHOULD TAKE CARE NOT TO LOSE THAT WHICH IS IMPORTANT.

SEE? HERE IT IS.

THE SWORD? YEAH.

YOU **DO** STILL HAVE THE SWORD, DON'T YOU?

YES, WHAT IS IT?

NOW, BEAR IN MIND THIS IS JUST HYPO-THETICAL...

HOW CAN I PUT THIS?

YES?

WHAT IF MY MOHAWK WASN'T A MOHAWK?

BUT WHAT IF... IF, MIND YOU...

I'M JUST BEING HYPO-THETICAL.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

WHAT IF YOUR MOHAWK WASN'T A MOHAWK?

HEH. IT IS PRETTY SILLY, HUH? SORRY.

HA HA! FOOLISH-NESS!

I MEAN, I'VE GOT THE SWORD, SO WHO CARES ABOUT THE MOHAWK, RIGHT? IT WOULD BE NO BIG DEAL IF... IF I LOST IT.

ALL WOULD BE LOST.

YOUR HYPOTHESIS IS LAUGHABLE. FOR IF WHAT YOU SAY WAS TO HAPPEN...

BEFORE MY DEATH, I WOULD ENSURE THAT YOU DIED BY MY HANDS.

WHAT'S MORE...

THE FIRST THING WE MUST DO IS LEARN WHERE THAT GUY WILL APPEAR NEXT. TOMORROW WILL BE A BUSY DAY FOR US.

OF COURSE NOT. EVEN AS A JOKE, IT IS IN POOR TASTE.

B-BUT OF COURSE, NOTHING I JUST SAID COULD HAPPEN!

IT LOOKS LIKE...

YEAH.

UNTIL TO-MORROW.

I HAVE TO SEARCH FOR MY MOHAWK.

BEFORE I CAN SEARCH FOR THAT GUY...

B.W.!

WHAT TROU-BLES YOU, KEITZ?

STILL, IT'S NOT LIKE I HAVE MUCH OF A CHOICE. I'M GOING TO NEED THAT MOHAWK.

THIS HAS CERTAINLY CHANGED THINGS. IS THIS REALLY SOMETHING THE SAVIOR WOULD BE DOING?!

IT'S SOMETHING IMPORTANT. IN A WAY, IT COULD AFFECT OUR VERY DESTINIES.

SUCH AS?

HOW CAN I PUT THIS? I GUESS YOU COULD SAY I'M LOOKING FOR SOMETHING.

YOU DON'T LOOK WELL.

I AM READY.

I'LL TRY TO USE WORDS YOU'LL UNDERSTAND, SO LISTEN CLOSE.

UH, IT'S HARD TO EXPLAIN. I DON'T THINK YOU'D HAVE ANYTHING LIKE IT IN THIS WORLD.

WHAT ON EARTH IS IT?!

HM?

PUT SIMPLY, IT'S ROUND, LIKE THIS. IT'S SOMETHING YOU'D PUT ON YOUR HEAD, WITH A PATCH OF HAIR COMING OUT OF IT.

WHAT?!

ACTUALLY, I SAW SOMETHING LIKE THAT JUST THIS MORNING.

=SIGH=

I GUESS EVEN EXPLAINING IT LIKE THIS, THERE'S NO WAY YOU'D UNDERSTAND. SORRY.

NO! IT'S NOT A QUIZ, SO I'M NOT LOOKING FOR AN ANSWER.

IS THIS A RIDDLE?

AH. THEN I'LL GO GET IT.

YES, THAT'S DEFINITELY IT! THERE'S NO WAY THERE COULD BE TWO OF THOSE THINGS HERE!

BUT **THAT** COULD AFFECT OUR DESTINIES? THAT'S REALLY WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR?

SURE.

ANYWAY, WAIT HERE A MOMENT.

YEAH, SORRY. POOR CHOICE OF WORDS.

BUT IF IT COULD AFFECT OUR VERY DESTINIES, WHY WOULD YOU JUST SAY YOU WERE "LOOKING FOR SOMETHING"?

YOU'VE BEEN A BIG HELP, B.W. THANKS A LOT.

YES! YES, THAT'S IT!

IS THIS WHAT YOU WERE LOOKING FOR?

H U H ?

I HAVE BROUGHT IT.

THANKS

HAVE FAITH IN YOUR-SELF.

YOU CAN DO IT.

YOU WILL BE FINE.

YEAH. IT HASN'T REALLY SUNK IN YET.

BUT IT SEEMS YOU WILL BE THE ONE TO SAVE OUR WORLD.

I DON'T QUITE UNDER-STAND...

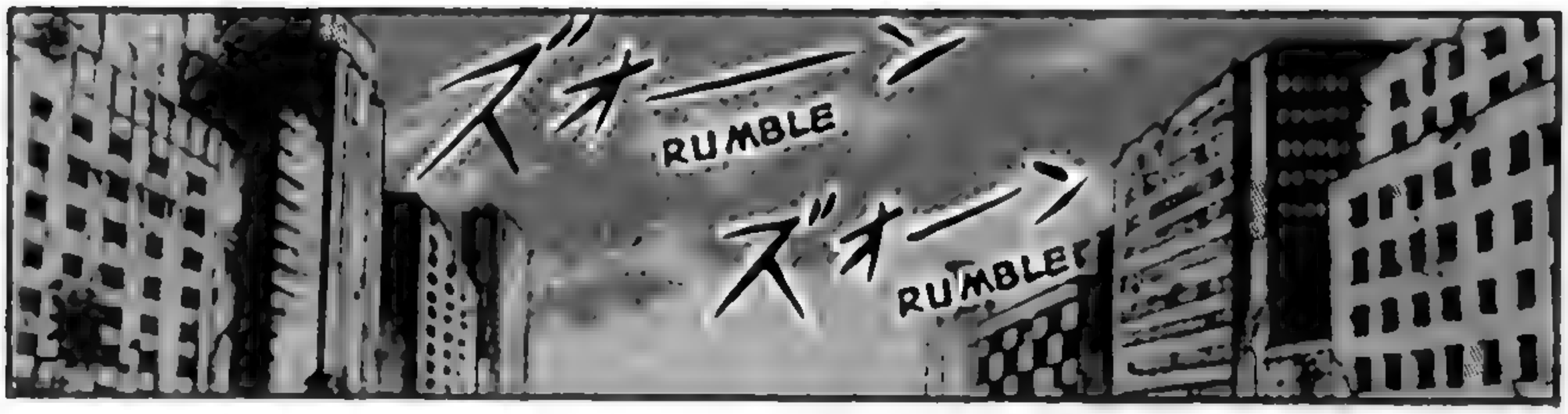
YES. GOOD LUCK.

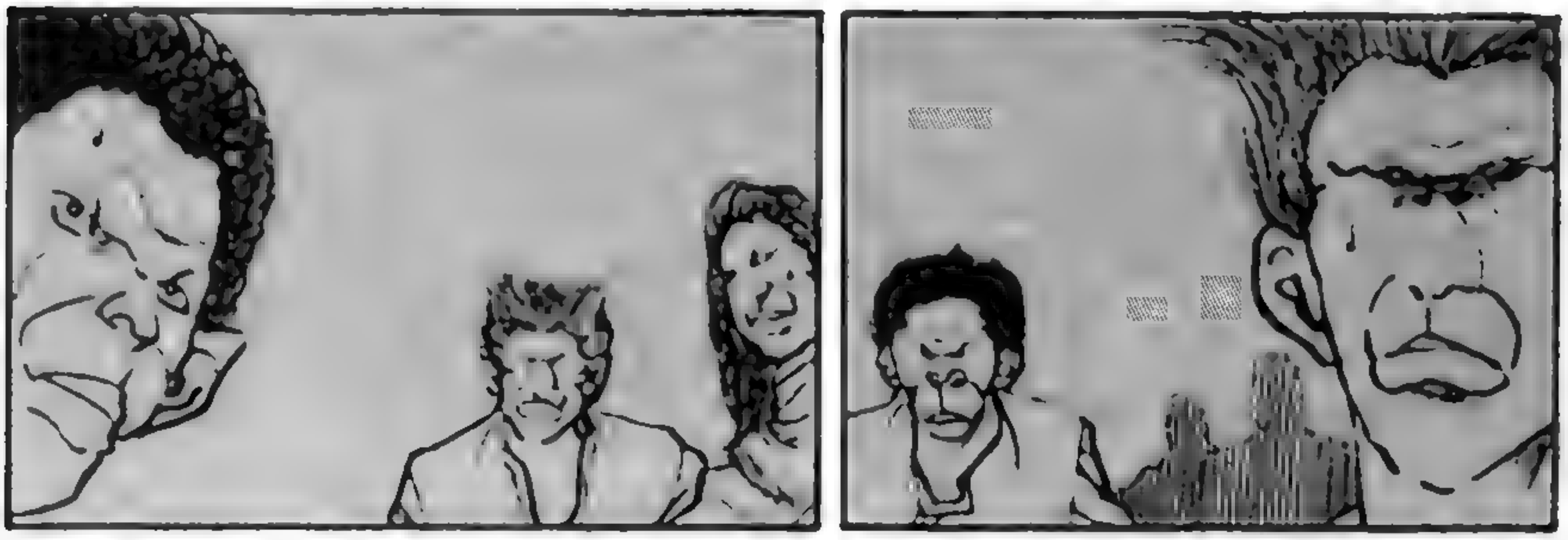
SEE YOU TOMORROW!

THIS ISN'T IT!

WHAT WOULD SOMETHING LIKE THAT BE DOING THERE? HEH.

CHAPTER 214: **SHOCK THE MONKEY**





CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL
INCREDIBLY LONG MOVIE · LIKE SPECIAL

HAYASHIDA AND THE SUBTERRANEAN EMPIRE OF THE APES

HE HAS COME.

ゴオーン

RRRUMBLE

WHAT IS IT?

BUT IF YOU DON'T MIND MY ASKING...

INDEED. WE'RE COUNTING ON YOU, KEITZ.

I GUESS THIS MEANS THE BATTLE'S ABOUT TO BEGIN.

YEAH. LOOKS LIKE IT.

HUH?

AREN'T YOU SOMEHOW **DIFFERENT** FROM HOW YOU WERE YESTERDAY?

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I'M JUST THE SAME AS ALWAYS.

WHAT?

ISN'T IT POSSIBLE **YOU'RE** THE ONE WHO'S DIFFERENT?

REALLY? I CAN'T QUITE PUT MY FINGER ON IT, BUT I FEEL THERE IS SOMETHING DIFFERENT ABOUT YOU.

OH, IT'S TOTALLY OBVIOUS.

IS IT THAT OBVIOUS?

. . . . . .

I THINK THE PROSPECT OF THAT GUY SHOWING UP HAS YOU A LITTLE SCARED. YOU'VE LOST YOUR NERVE.

JUST TRY TO RELAX AND GET YOUR HEAD CLEAR.

YOU'RE RIGHT. I AM RATHER ANXIOUS. MY APOLOGIES.

WITH YOU ALL SHAKEN UP LIKE THIS, DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU'RE SEEING THINGS CLEARLY RIGHT NOW?

PEOPLE ARE BOUND TO NOTICE THERE'S SOMETHING **OFF** ABOUT ALL THIS.

THAT WAS CLOSE. THAT WAS REALLY CLOSE.

IS THIS GUY REALLY THE CHOSEN WARRIOR? SUDDENLY I'M NOT SO SURE...

I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE HE BOUGHT THAT STORY JUST NOW! THERE'S SUCH A THING AS BEING DIM, BUT THAT'S PRETTY DAMN DIM!

YES?

LORD RIZER!

OH, WELL. I CAN'T BACK OUT NOW. I HAVE TO THINK OF A WAY TO RIDE THIS THING OUT.

. . . . . .

WITH YOUR PERMISSION, I WOULD LIKE TO ASSEMBLE A SQUADRON AND MOVE OUT AT ONCE.

JUST AS YOU SUSPECTED, IT WOULD SEEM THAT THAT GUY IS IN HIDING SOMEWHERE TO THE WEST.

THIS MAN IS THE SAVIOR.

LORD RIZER, WHO IS THIS PERSON?

YES. HE MAY MAKE THAT HIS BASE OF OPERATIONS FROM WHICH TO LAUNCH HIS ATTACK.

HE'S SOME-WHERE WEST?

HUH?

WHAT EXACTLY ARE YOU IMPLYING?!

. . . . . .

THE **MO-HAWKED** SAVIOR?

AH.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO **SAY** ANYTHING-- I CAN SEE IT IN YOUR EYES!

I-I DON'T THINK I'VE SAID ANYTHING TO OFFEND YOU.

What are you getting mad at ME for?

YOU'RE PROBABLY THINKING, "GEE, HE DOESN'T LOOK HOW I EXPECTED" OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT, AREN'T YOU? FOR YOUR INFORMATION, THE WISE MAN WHO LIVES IN THE MOUNTAIN SAID I'M THE MOHAWKED SAVIOR, ALRIGHT? WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY TO THAT?!

SPLSSH

TOILET

THIS WHOLE ORDEAL HAS BEEN MOST UNPLEASANT! I'M GOING TO THE BATHROOM.

PLEASE ACCEPT MY APOLOGIES FOR ANY AFFRONT. SUCH WAS NOT MY INTENTION.

I NEED TO DEFEAT THAT GUY AND PUT AN END TO THIS SOON, OR THINGS ARE GOING TO START TURNING UGLY.

SPLSSH

IT LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE ALREADY STARTING TO SENSE THAT SOMETHING'S UP... JEEZ, I CAN'T EVEN RELAX ENOUGH TO GO TO THE BATHROOM.

HUH?

.....

WHERE DID I DROP IT?

THIS IS BAD! I'VE GOT TO FIND IT, FAST!

I-IT'S GONE!

NOW IT'S NOT EVEN CLOSE TO BEING A MOHAWK. I JUST LOOK LIKE SOME BALDING OLD GUY! AND THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO ABOUT IT. I'M NOT THE SAVIOR... I'M NOT ANYTHING.

DID I FLUSH IT AWAY?

WAIT A MINUTE. ONE OF THE CONDITIONS OF BEING THE SAVIOR IS THAT YOU HAVE TO HAVE A MOHAWK, BUT MINE WAS A FAKE RIGHT FROM THE START! I FEEL LIKE GETTING WORKED UP ABOUT THIS NOW IS SORT OF MEANINGLESS...

. . . . . .

I AM THE MOHAWKED SAVIOR.

I'LL JUST HAVE TO BE PER-SISTENT.

THIS'LL DO. AT LEAST, THAT'S HOW I PLAN TO CONVINCE MYSELF.

AAH, WHAT-EVER.

TRYING TO INSIST THIS IS A MOHAWK IS TAKING THINGS TOO FAR! IT'S PRACTICALLY A CRIME!

IT'S NO GOOD!

MY MOHAWK WAS A FAKE ALL ALONG.

I'LL TELL THEM THE TRUTH.

I'LL JUST HAVE TO COME CLEAN.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT IS UP TO THEM. I'LL GO ALONG WITH WHATEVER THEY DECIDE.

I'LL PROBABLY BE STRIPPED OF THE TITLE OF "SAVIOR," BUT OH WELL.

CHK

CHK

!!

TOILET

HM?

THEY ARE FOLLOWING THE RUMORS. THEY HAVE COME TO SEE THEIR SAVIOR.

SAY, RIZER? WHO ARE ALL THESE PEOPLE?

GOOD LUCK, SIR. I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON, BUT I SURE HOPE WE HAVE PEACE IN OUR LAND AGAIN.

HUH?

ARE YOU THE MO-HAWKED MAN?

Y-YEAH.

NO, YOU'VE GOT IT ALL WRONG. I'M NOT THE SAVIOR. I DON'T EVEN HAVE A MOHAWK!

DID YOU TAKE OUR REQUEST TO THE SAVIOR? GOOD LAD.

BUT THE THING IS, I'M NOT--

HM?

HUH?!

YOU HAVE THE AURA.

EVERYONE! THERE'S NOTHING MORE TO FEAR! OUR SAVIOR HAS DESCENDED FROM THE HEAVENS!

LOOK, PLEASE LISTEN.

UH...

YOU ARE OUR LAST HOPE, MOHAWK.

YEAAAH!

THE MOHAWK ISN'T WHAT'S IMPORTANT.

STANDING HERE IN FRONT OF ALL THESE PEOPLE, I'VE FINALLY REALIZED SOMETHING.

I AM THAT SOMEONE. I'M WHAT THEY'VE BEEN-WAITING FOR.

THESE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR SOMEONE TO TURN TO--SOMEONE THAT CAN HELP THEM.

SCUFF.

RIGHT BEHIND YOU.

VERY WELL. LET'S GO, KEITZ.

I'M THEIR HOPE.

DO YOUR BEST!
YAY!
LORD RIZER!
GOOD LUCK!
THE WARRIOR AND THE SAVIOR!
SCUFF
THERE THEY ARE!
OUR MOHAWKED SAVIOR CAN DO IT!
LONG LIVE LORD RIZER!
THANK YOU!
YOU CAN WIN!
THANK YOU.
YOU CAN DO IT!
MO-HAWKED SAVIOR, YOU ROCK!
BRING US PEACE!
THANK YOU.
WE BE-LIEVE IN YOU!
SAVE OUR WORLD!
UH, I THOUGHT I SAW SOMETHING THAT BELONGED TO ME. I GUESS I JUST IMAGINED IT...
WHAT TROUBLES YOU, KEITZ?

TAKE A CLOSE LOOK.

CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL
INCREDIBLY LONG MOVIE-LIKE SPECIAL

HAYASHIDA AND THE SUBTERRANEAN EMPIRE OF THE APES

CHAPTER 215: **BRASS MONKEY**

THANKS, RIZER. AND I'LL DO MY BEST TO DEFEAT THAT GUY.

THERE'S NO WAY OF KNOWING WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT, KEITZ, BUT I PROMISE YOU THIS: I SHALL DO MY BEST TO PROTECT YOU.

WHAT IS THAT?!

AFTER ALL, THAT GUY ONLY MANIFESTS JUST ONCE EVERY 50 YEARS... AND HE CANNOT BE SO EASILY APPROACHED. THESE ARE FEARSOME WARRIORS INDEED.

ONCE THEY WERE OUR ALLIES. BUT THEY HAVE TURNED, BECOMING THAT GUY'S PAWNS.

RIZER? WHO ARE THESE GUYS?

K-SHANG

K-SHANG

K-SHANG

HMPH. OUR BUSINESS IS NOT WITH YOU, PEON.

TAKE THE SAVIOR AND GO!

LORD RIZER! LET US HANDLE THIS!

MO-HAWKED...

...

WE SHALL TAKE CUSTODY OF THE MOHAWKED SAVIOR.

...

WHAT?! WHERE IS THE TARGET?

HUH?! NONE OF THEM HAS A MOHAWK!

FIND HIM AT ONCE!

ONE OF THEM MUST BE THE MOHAWKED SAVIOR!

IMPOS-SIBLE!

WAS OUR INFORMATION INCORRECT?

HOWEVER, WE CAN'T GO BACK EMPTY-HANDED. WE'LL JUST HAVE TO COMPROMISE A LITTLE.

THIS IS STRANGE INDEED.

WE'VE LOOKED CLOSELY, BUT HE'S NOWHERE TO BE FOUND.

AH. RELATIVELY MOHAWK-LIKE HAIR. IN THAT CASE...

FIND SOMEONE WHO HAS RELATIVELY MOHAWK-LIKE HAIR.

COM-PROMISE? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

GO! NOW! AT-TACK!

WHAT?!

THONK

HNGH!

HUH?

KEITZ! LET'S GO.

YOU HAVE MY THANKS.

LORD RIZER! WE'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS!

AAAAGH

WHAT'S WITH THIS CAVE?

OUR ENEMIES HAVEN'T REALIZED THAT WE KNOW OF THIS ROUTE. WE SHOULD ACT NOW, WHILE THEY ARE DISTRACTED IN BATTLE.

IF WE PASS THROUGH HERE, WE SHALL ARRIVE AT THE ENEMY'S LAIR. MANY OF OUR BRETHREN DIED TO BRING US THIS INFORMATION....HOWEVER, THAT IS THE EXTENT OF OUR KNOWLEDGE. THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT AWAITS US.

UNFORTUNATELY, NO. IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THEY REALIZE WHERE WE'VE GONE.

SO WE'LL BE SAFE ONCE WE PASS THROUGH HERE?

SCUFF

SCUFF

PHEW

SO WE'VE JUST BEEN WALKING AROUND AT RANDOM?!

NOT TO WORRY.

WHAT?

ACTUALLY, I DON'T KNOW THE EXACT LOCATION.

HOW MUCH FARTHER IS IT TILL WE GET THERE?

WHAT'S THAT?

RRRUMBLE

THAT GUY CAN BE FOUND BY--

GAH!

!!

B-CRACK

IT'S HERE!

!!

THAT'S FAR ENOUGH.

OK.

HURRY! THE ROCK HERE IS WEAK!

WHAT IS THAT?!

SHOCK-WAVES. IF THEY'VE REACHED THIS FAR, THEN THAT GUY IS...

DAMN.

YOU ARE A THIRD-RATE WARRIOR AND A **FOOL**! THIS IS A FITTING END FOR YOU, DOG.

RIZER, DID YOU ACTUALLY THINK WE WERE UNAWARE OF YOUR PASSAGE?

IN BEING A THIRD-RATE WARRIOR.

BUT THERE IS SOME PRIDE...

YOU MAY BE RIGHT.

HMPH.

HM?!

AS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE WARRIOR, IT'S THE ESOTERIC TECHNIQUE OF DEATH!

ZWORRR

RRRUMBLE

ゴゴゴ

IT CAN-NOT BE!

AAGH!

BWMM

GWGH!

I'LL HANDLE THIS. YOU GO ON AHEAD.

ARE YOU OK, RIZER?

HE IS PRE-PARED TO DIE IN BATTLE!

IT IS THE ULTIMATE OF THE ESOTERIC TECHNIQUES, EXECUTED USING THE WARRIOR'S OWN LIFE ENERGY.

THIS IS THE POWER OF THE TECH-NIQUE OF DEATH?

THE SWORD WILL TAKE YOU TO HIM.

YOU WILL.

BUT I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE THAT GUY IS!

SAY NO MORE!

BUT I CAN'T JUST LEAVE YOU HERE!

GO WHERE THE SWORD DIRECTS YOU, AND YOU WILL FIND HIM.

HUH? THE SWORD KNOWS WHERE HE IS?!

...

GO NOW!

DO NOT LET MY DEATH BE IN VAIN!

HURRY! GO!

Y-YOU BET! JUST WATCH, I WON'T LET YOU DOWN!

IF WE MAKE IT THROUGH THIS ALIVE, LET US MEET AGAIN, KEITZ.

RIZER!

THP

THP

THP

OK.

THE SWORD IS GUIDING ME! THIS WAY, HUH?

VWEEEN

WHICH WAY SHOULD I GO?

THP THP THP

HERE!

VWEEN

I KNOW WHERE TO GO!

I...

THP THP

I CAN SEE IT!

IT'S GOTTA BE NEAR!

THE REACTION FROM THE SWORD HAS GOTTEN STRONGER.

VWEEN

FOR RIZER... FOR B.W.... FOR EVERYONE! I WILL GO!

THE SWORD IS TELLING ME WHERE THAT GUY IS!

THIS IS IT!

HERE!

FLASH

PERFECT.

KA-CHK

DAMMIT, THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR!

SO THAT'S WHERE IT WENT.

CHAPTER 216: **MONKEY MAGIC**

WHAT IS THIS PIECE OF HAIR DOING HERE? I'M COMPLETELY LOST!

Is this thing even mine?

YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDDING ME! WHAT IS THIS SUPPOSED TO MEAN?!

CHK

IT CAN'T DO ANY HARM... BESIDES, I CAN'T JUST LEAVE IT HERE.

I GUESS I SHOULD GO AHEAD AND PUT IT ON.

HUH?

F" CRKK F"

F"F"F" RRUMBLE

RRRRUMBLE

CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL
INCREDIBLY LONG MOVIE-LIKE SPECIAL

HAYASHIDA AND THE SUBTERRANEAN EMPIRE OF THE APES

WHOA!

IT'S JUST A PIECE OF HAIR.

NAH.

IS THIS THING THE KEY THAT WILL TAKE ME TO THAT GUY?!

A DOOR OPENED!

IT CLOSED.

G-CHONK

RUMBLE

HUH?

RRRUMBLE

I THINK THAT'S ABOUT ENOUGH OF THAT.

CRKK

BUT NOT PUT IT ON.

ゴゴゴ RUMBLE

FINE. I'LL **ACT** LIKE I PUT IT ON...

AH, IT ALL MAKES SENSE!

AND THE SWORD OF LIGHTNING LED ME TO IT.

IN ANY CASE, IT LOOKS LIKE THIS HAIR PIECE IS SOME KIND OF SWITCH.

ゴゴゴ RRRUMBLE

カチャ K-CHK

WHATEVER. I'M JUST GONNA KEEP ON GOING.

EXCEPT...WHAT ABOUT THE MOHAWK? NOW I FEEL LIKE THIS **ALMOST** MAKES SENSE WHILE NOT ACTUALLY MAKING SENSE AT ALL.

!

THP

THP

WE'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU.

. . . . . .

WELCOME.

WE KNOW NOTHING.

AREN'T YOU GUYS MY ENE-MIES?

I DON'T GET IT.

. . . . . .

PLEASE, ENTER.

WHO IS "HE"? YOUR BOSS?

BUT HE AWAITS WITHIN. ENTER AND YOU WILL LEARN ALL.

!!

CREAK

CHK

CHK

CHK

WHAT?

K-TNK

K-TNK

CLANG

CLANG

RATTLE

RATTLE

HUH?

!!

CREAK

.....

NICELY DONE.

I SEE YOU'VE FOUND ME.

HEH.

YOU'RE HUMAN!

UH...

LET ME ASK YOU THE SAME QUESTION-- WHAT ARE **YOU** DOING HERE, HUMAN?

YOU'RE THEIR BOSS?! WHAT ARE YOU EVEN DOING HERE?

. . .

EXPLANATIONS ARE IRRELEVANT. THIS HAS ALL BEEN PREORDAINED.

WELL? YOU CAN'T ANSWER, CAN YOU? THAT'S BECAUSE THERE IS NO ANSWER.

SHUT UP AND LISTEN.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!

HUH? JOB?

NOW THEN. THIS IS THE JOB YOU'LL BE PERFORMING.

THIS PLACE IS FILLED WITH MACHINES OF WAR. YOU'RE GOING TO USE THEM TO REDUCE THE MONKEY POPULATION.

YOUR JOB IS TO KILL THEM. TAKE THE MONKEYS' LIVES.

IF THERE ARE TOO MANY OF THEM, THEY'LL START TO DEVELOP A CIVILIZATION. AND THEN THE WARS WILL BEGIN... THEY'LL PROBABLY DESTROY THEIR WORLD AGAIN.

AND NOT JUST WEAPONS--USE EARTHQUAKES AND LIGHTNING, TOO.

BULLSHIT!

I'VE GOTTEN TOO OLD TO DO THIS ANYMORE. IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO TAKE MY PLACE.

CIVILIZATION IS THE ROOT OF ALL CONFLICT. POPULATION CONTROL IS WHAT STOPS THE MONKEYS FROM DESTROYING THEMSELVES.

YOU JUST DON'T GET IT, DO YOU?

YOU'RE A LIAR!

I JUST TOLD YOU. IF THERE ARE TOO MANY OF THEM, THEY'LL DEVELOP A CIVILIZATION. TO STOP THAT FROM HAPPENING, YOU HAVE TO DRIVE THEM TO THE POINT OF EXTINCTION. THAT'S WHAT IT MEANS TO BE THE SAVIOR.

YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT MURDER! WHY THE HELL WOULD I DO SOME-THING LIKE THAT?!

YOU'RE THE FOURTH SAVIOR.

SHIP

THE OLD MAN IN THE MOUNTAIN TOLD YOU, RIGHT?

WH-
WHAT?!

I'M THE
THIRD.

HEH.
TOOK
YOU LONG
ENOUGH.

WAIT A
MINUTE!
YOU DON'T
HAVE A
MOHAWK!

IT'S UP TO YOU TO
TAKE MY PLACE.
YOUR MOHAWK IS
PROOF THAT THIS
IS YOUR FATE...
YOUR DUTY.

AGH!

BWOMP

NO!

I'M
SMASHING
ALL
THIS TO
PIECES!

YOU KNOW
WHAT THAT
MEANS? IT
MEANS YOUR
"DUTY" CAN
GO SUCK IT.

YES, THIS HASN'T WORKED OUT VERY WELL.

I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE DANGER-OUS TO ENTRUST YOUR DUTY TO THIS ONE, SIR.

NGH

!!

THONK

HGH!

GH!

THNK

HM?

Not so fast!

YES, SIR.

GET RID OF HIM.

HN?!

BZZT

AGH!

BZZT

Zap.

WHO ARE YOU, INFI-DEL?!

WHAT?

Kiss your schemes goodbye, jackass.

I'm charged and ready!

SIR.

KILL THEM.

MORE FILTH, EH?

YOUR FRIEND BROUGHT ME.

HOW DID YOU GET HERE?!

B.W.!

KEITZ!

HFF

THOMP

!!

THWOK

BWSH

HM?

THAT'S ENOUGH!

I GOT THIS FROM A FRIEND. I DON'T KNOW WHY HE HAD IT...

YES, THIS IS IT! SO YOU KNEW THAT GUY IN THE CROWD AFTER ALL!

ALSO, I BROUGHT **THIS**. I THOUGHT IT MAY BE WHAT YOU WERE LOOKING FOR.

I DON'T REALLY GET IT MYSELF.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND. HOW DID YOU GET HERE? YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE A MOHAWK! THIS IS UNHEARD OF!

. . . . . .

MAYBE IT'S JUST LIKE YOU SAID-- MAYBE IT'S FATE.

WHO KNOWS?

AND WHILE WE'RE AT IT, MY NAME AIN'T "KEITZ."

NOPE.

KEITZ? ARE YOU NOT THE MOHAWKED SAVIOR?

K-TNK

SHP

HUH?

AND I'M A FIRST-YEAR STUDENT AT CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL!

MY NAME IS SHINJIRO HAYASHIDA.

CRO-MAR-TIE?

YEAH, I GOT IT BACK. ALL OF IT.

YOUR MEM-ORY!

HUH?

YOU MEAN THAT SCHOOL FOR IDIOTS?

ARGH! I'M SO FRIGGIN EMBAR-RASSED!

Why did I have to bring that up?

YEAH, MY COUSIN USED TO GO THERE.

Y-YOU KNOW ABOUT CROMARTIE?

HMM. IT'S RATHER HARD TO JOIN IN WHEN I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT...

. . . .

THAT PLACE IS STILL OPEN? IT'S GOOD AND CHEAP, HUH?

HEY, DO YOU KNOW THAT BAKERY ON THE CORNER?

TALK ABOUT A STRANGE TURN OF EVENTS.

GWORRR

THAT'S WHAT HE'S MAD ABOUT?

AH!

YOU'VE HAD IT!

THAT'S IT! I'LL TEACH YOU TO MAKE FUN OF MY SCHOOL!

CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL
INCREDIBLY LONG MOVIE-LIKE SPECIAL

HAYASHIDA AND THE SUBTERRANEAN EMPIRE OF THE APES

CHAPTER 217: MONKEY CHANGES EVERYTHING

AH!

SKRASH

SKRASH

HUH?

DON'T BOTHER.

EVERYTHING WILL BE DESTROYED!

QUICKLY! STOP HIM!

BWSSH

AGH!

SCUM!

WELL?!

GWORRR

YOU WANNA TAKE ME ON? LET'S GO!

HNH

BWSH

HOW ABOUT YOU?!

WHAT?

I'VE TURNED OFF ALL THE MACHINES.

BEEEP

THERE'S NO MORE NEED FOR FIGHTING.

WHAT HAS HE DONE?!

TH-THE MACHINES HAVE STOPPED! WE'RE FINISHED!

PSSSH

CHNK

CHNK

RUN!

9" THP

9" THP

OUR WORLD IS DOOMED!

HE'S LOST HIS MIND! HIS ACTIONS ARE AN AFFRONT TO GOD!

OH, NO!

YOU'RE FREE. DO WHAT YOU LIKE.

WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?

YEAH.

SO WE'RE FREE FROM OUR TORMENT?

IT WILL?

OH, THAT. DON'T WORRY. IT'LL OPEN SOON ENOUGH.

BUT I DON'T SEE ANY WAY HOME OPENING UP.

WHY DID YOU STOP THE MACHINES? DOES THAT WORK FOR YOU SOMEHOW?

JUST WAIT.

I'VE BEEN KILLING OFF THE MONKEYS FOR DECADES. BUT SOMEWHERE IN THE BACK OF MY MIND, I'VE ALWAYS WONDERED IF I'M DOING THE RIGHT THING...

THE TRUTH IS, I'M TIRED.

. . .

BUT THERE'S ONE MORE THING.

I THINK THIS WHOLE TIME, I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR SOMEONE TO STOP ME. I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR **YOU**.

. . .

THE MONKEYS MIGHT JUST ADVANCE THEIR CIVILIZATION TO THE POINT THAT THEY DESTROY THEMSELVES AGAIN. I GUESS ONLY TIME WILL TELL.

THERE'S NO WAY OF KNOWING IF TURNING OFF THE MACHINES WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO OR NOT.

CRACK

KRKK

KRKK

CRACK

HUH?

KEITZ! LOOK UP THERE!

HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO GET UP THERE?

BUT...

CRKK

CRKK

CR-CRKK!

AH! IS THAT THE WAY OUT?!

THE CEILING OPENED UP!

YEAH, YEAH.

HURRY! CLIMB!

I DON'T KNOW. THIS LOOKS PRETTY IFFY IF YOU ASK ME. IT'S NOT LIKE I'VE GOT ANY OTHER CHOICE, BUT STILL...

YOU CAN CLIMB UP THIS ROPE!

RIZER! YOU'RE ALIVE! I'M REALLY GLAD YOU MADE IT.

HUH?

KEITZ!

IT'S NOT LIKE I CAN CARRY HIM.

The rope would snap.

I THINK IT'S OUT OF POWER AGAIN.

WHAT ABOUT THIS?

BEEEP

WAIT.

WELL, I'M OUT. BYE.

YEAH. HE'S A HUMAN FROM MY WORLD.

THAT GUY? YOU MEAN THE OLD MAN?

ACTUALLY, I'D LIKE TO TAKE THAT GUY BACK WITH ME.

VERY WELL.

I'LL COME BACK FOR HIM LATER.

WHAT?

HE NO LONGER DRAWS BREATH.

I'M TELLIN' YOU, I'M NOT THE SAVIOR! MY LEAVING WON'T MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

BUT IF KEITZ IS THE SAVIOR, WHAT WILL WE DO ONCE HE'S GONE?!

OK.

HURRY, KEITZ! THERE'S NO WAY OF KNOWING HOW LONG THE PORTAL WILL STAY OPEN!

IT'S OK, B.W. IN THIS WORLD, I'M KEITZ.

MY APOLOGIES. YES, HAYASHIDA.

YES, KEITZ.

OK?

THERE IS NO SAVIOR! THAT KIND OF STUFF IS JUST MAKE-BELIEVE. IT'S WHAT YOU READ ABOUT IN KIDS' STORIES. THE ONLY THING THAT'LL SAVE YOU IS **YOU**, YOUR OWN DETERMINATION.

KAMI-YAMA.

IT'S...

MY NAME?

SPEAKING OF, B.W. IS YOUR NICKNAME, RIGHT? I'VE NEVER HEARD YOUR REAL NAME.

GOODBYE, HAYASHIDA.

WELL, BYE.

NOTHING. FORGET ABOUT IT.

KEITZ? WHAT IS IT?

BYE

I'VE ALREADY SAID GOODBYE... IT WOULD BE KINDA HARD TO FACE THEM IF I HAD TO TURN AROUND AND GO BACK. NO, I CAN'T GO BACK.

IT WOULD BE SORT OF A SHOCK IF IT TURNED OUT THIS WASN'T THE WAY HOME.

I'M PRETTY TIRED.

I'VE BEEN CLIMBING FOR AN HOUR NOW.

AT SOME POINT, THIS ROPE SEEMS TO HAVE BECOME A LADDER. OH, WELL.

IT'S THE WAY OUT!

HUH? IS THAT...

PHEW

S

I'M BACK IN MY OWN WORLD!

THIS IS...

HM?

HEY!

AND I'M BUSHED. I'M GOIN' HOME.

HUH?!

WE'RE HAVIN' OURSELVES SOME FUN WITH A LITTLE CROMARTIE HUNTING. NOTHIN' PERSONAL, BUT YOU'RE NOT GOIN' ANYWHERE.

I KNOW THAT UNIFORM. YOU GO TO CROMARTIE, DON'T YA?

AGH!

IT'S THOSE GUYS FROM BEFORE!

NO

YEAH.

YOU'LL PUT UP A FIGHT, WON'T YA? I MEAN, YOU'RE FROM CROMARTIE.

HUH?!

HUH?

SORRY.

I DON'T REALLY GET IT, BUT IF I'VE DONE SOMETHING TO OFFEND YOU, I APOLOGIZE.

LET'S GO.

WHAT A JOKE!

FIGHTIN' THIS IDIOT WOULD BE A WASTE OF TIME!

HA! WHAT'S WITH THIS GUY? IS HE THE SCHOOL PUSHOVER OR SOMETHIN'?

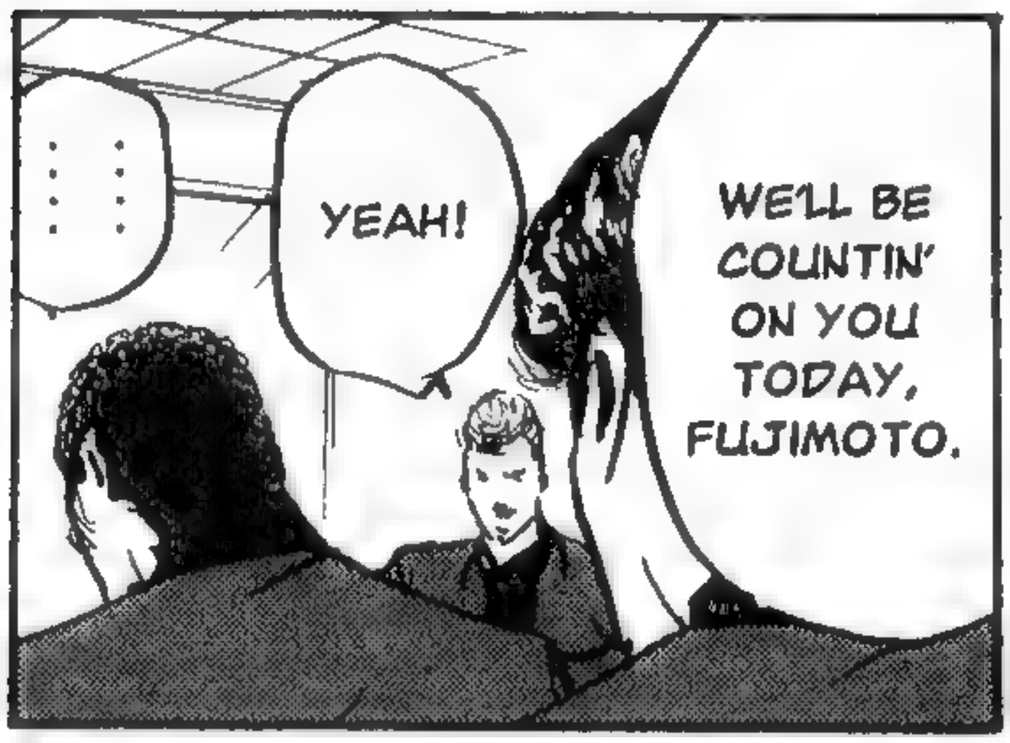
HEH HEH

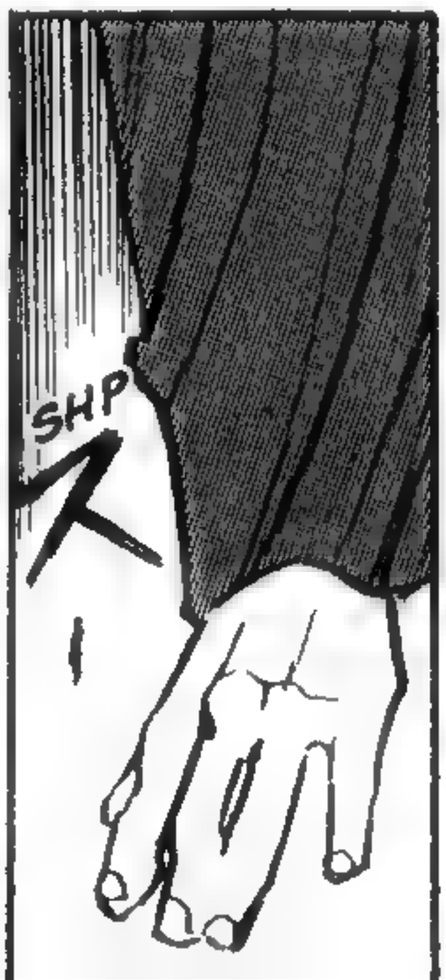
YEAH. THAT'S THAT.

. . . . . .

THANK YOU ALL FOR READING THAT RATHER LONG TALE.

CHAPTER 218: **MAIN MAN**





WHAT THE HECK?

HUH?

IF DOIN' THIS WILL MAKE IT UP TO YOU GUYS, THEN I'LL DO IT AS MANY TIMES AS IT TAKES. BUT I CAN'T GO TODAY.

FUJIMOTO'S ON HIS HANDS AND KNEES!

...

RATTLE

SH-PAK!

RATTLE

BOSS!

SHP

ARE YOU FRIGGIN CRAZY?! WE'RE TALKIN' ABOUT FUJIMOTO! THE GUY'S A MONSTER!

Y-YOU DON'T THINK HE'S SCARED, DO YOU?

HE MUST HAVE SOME REASON FOR NOT GOIN' THAT HE CAN'T TELL US.

WHAT WAS THAT ALL ABOUT? WHY WOULD FUJIMOTO, LIKE, PROSTRATE HIMSELF FOR US?

I'VE BEEN HIS RIGHT-HAND MAN SINCE WE WAS KIDS, SO I KNOW ALL ABOUT HIM. THEY USED TO CALL HIM "THE DEVIL," YOU KNOW THAT? HIS OWN MOM COULD BE ON HER DEATHBED AND HE **STILL** WOULDN'T BE LATE FOR A FIGHT! THERE'S NO WAY HE'D BE SCARED OF THOSE DESTRADE PUNKS.

WHATEVER HIS REASON IS, IT'S GOTTA BE SOMETHIN' IMPORTANT.

BUT THERE'S ONE THING I CAN SAY FOR SURE...

BEATS ME.

WHAT THE HECK'S GOIN' ON?!

THEN WHAT IS IT?

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

IT'S SOMETHIN' SO HARDCORE THAT NONE OF US COULD HANDLE IT.

CHK

THE AKIHABARA ELEC-TRONICS DISTRICT

IT'S LIKE, IT JUST CONFIRMS THAT THIS IS WHERE I BELONG.

MM. EVERY TIME I COME HERE, I FEEL RELAXED.

THIS IS A SPECIAL DAY FOR ME. YOU KNOW WHY?

I BACKED OUT OF A FIGHT, AN OFFLINE GET-TOGETHER, A WEDDING, A FUNERAL... I CLEARED MY WHOLE FRIGGIN SCHEDULE TO COME HERE TODAY.

TODAY'S THE DAY I TRY TO BUILD MY OWN COMPUTER.

ANYONE CAN GO TO A STORE AND BUY A READY-MADE COMPUTER, BUT I'M TALKIN' ABOUT BUYING EACH INDIVIDUAL PART AND MAKIN' THAT COMPUTER MYSELF.

YOUR AVERAGE PC USER PROBABLY DOESN'T KNOW WHAT I MEAN, SO I'LL EXPLAIN.

IT'S NOT LIKE I'VE GOTTA SOLDER THE COMPONENTS TOGETHER OR ANYTHING. IT'S MORE LIKE PUTTIN' TOGETHER PARTS THAT SOMEONE ELSE HAS MADE.

IF YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT COMPUTERS, THAT MAY SOUND LIKE A BIG DEAL, BUT IT'S NOT.

YOUR AMATEUR USERS WOULD BE BETTER OFF JUST BUYIN' A READY-MADE PC.

BUILDIN' MY OWN COMPUTER IS THE NEXT STEP. IT'S SOMETHIN' I'VE GOTTA DO. OF COURSE, I'M A MID-LEVEL USER WHO CAN EVEN INSERT A MEMORY CARD! I CAN'T RECOMMEND ANY BEGINNERS OUT THERE TRY SOMETHIN' LIKE THIS.

IT'S LIKE CHOCOLATE. EVEN IF I DON'T GO OUT AND GRIND THE COCOA BEANS MYSELF, SO LONG AS I MELT A BLOCK OF READY-MADE STUFF AND SHAPE IT, I CAN STILL SAY I MADE IT.

WEL-COME.

THE 64-BIT CPU IS ON ITS WAY!

PUT YOUR ORDERS IN NOW!

WE'RE DRIVING DOWN PRICES ON MEMORY!

SPECIALS ON PC CASES

STEEL MOTHER-BOARDS!

AP-03

LCD DISPLAYS!

17" Monitors

MOUSE? KEYBOARD? NOW ON SALE

GET 'EM NOW! USED POWER SUPPLIES

I'M REALLY INTO COMPUTERS. I'M NOT TRYING TO BRAG OR ANYTHING, BUT I'D SAY I KNOW A LOT ABOUT THEM.

SIR?

DO YOU HAVE A MINUTE?

. . .

AGAIN, I'M NOT BRAGGING, BUT RECENTLY I EVEN MANAGED TO INSERT SOME MEMORY INTO MY COMPUTER.

OK...

. . .

DO YOU THINK I CAN DO IT?

NOW I THINK I'D LIKE TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP--I'D LIKE TO BUILD MY OWN COMPUTER.

STILL, THIS IS MY FIRST TIME. IF YOU COULD GIVE ME ANY TIPS ON WHAT TO WATCH OUT FOR, I'D REALLY APPRECIATE IT.

THAT'S WHAT I WAS HOPING YOU'D SAY. AAH, THAT'S A LOAD OFF MY MIND!

HM, I THINK YOU'LL BE FINE. ALMOST EVERYONE SEEMS TO BE BUILDING THEIR OWN PCS THESE DAYS.

IF YOU CONNECT A SECOND DRIVE, THAT WILL BE THE SLAVE AND YOUR STARTUP DRIVE WILL BE THE MASTER. FOR THE SLAVE, YOU COULD INSERT A SECONDARY HARD DRIVE, AN OPTICAL DRIVE, OR BOTH IF YOU HAVE ENOUGH BAYS. IT'S UP TO YOU.

YOU'RE GOING TO WANT TO PUT YOUR STARTUP DRIVE, THE ONE THAT RUNS YOUR SYSTEM, IN THE PRIMARY POSITION. THAT'S JUST FUNDAMENTAL.

WELL, A COMMON PROBLEM IS THE COMPUTER NOT RECOGNIZING ONE OR MORE OF THE DRIVES.

OF COURSE, YOU'LL HAVE TO MAKE SURE THE JUMPER ON YOUR STARTUP DRIVE IS SET TO MASTER. IF YOU'RE BUILDING A RAID ARRAY AND YOU CONNECT MORE THAN TWO DRIVES, THAT'LL CHANGE YOUR JUMPER SETTINGS, SO YOU SHOULD WATCH OUT FOR THAT. GRANTED, IF YOUR MOTHERBOARD SUPPORTS SATA YOU COULD GO THAT ROUTE, BUT THEN YOU'D HAVE TO INSTALL A WHOLE NEW SET OF DRIVERS, WHICH WOULD VARY DEPENDING ON YOUR CHIPSET. IT'S NOT SOMETHING I'D RECOMMEND TO A BEGINNER.

REST AREA

THANK YOU, THAT WAS REALLY EASY TO UNDERSTAND. I'LL JUST BE GOING NOW.

YEAH, I GUESS THAT'S IT.

IF YOU KEEP THIS IN MIND, I THINK YOU'LL BE FINE.

REST AREA

I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND A FRICKIN' THING HE SAID!

RNGH...

WHAT DO I DO? I COULD JUST GO HOME AND AVOID EMBARRASSING MYSELF, BUT DOING THAT WOULD GET ME NOWHERE! I'D STAY A BEGINNER FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE!

BEFORE I EVEN REALIZED IT, I WAS SHOWING OFF AND SAYING I UNDERSTOOD!

HM?

UM...

THERE'S NO SHAME IN IT.

EVEN SEASONED PROS START OUT AS BEGINNERS.

I HAVE TO TELL HIM THE TRUTH!

YOU PROBABLY THINK OF ME AS A BEGINNER WITH A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF KNOWLEDGE...

THE TRUTH IS, I DIDN'T REALLY UNDER-STAND. AT ALL.

ABOUT BEFORE, WHEN I SAID I UNDERSTOOD...

NO.

WELL, DID YOU KNOW THAT LED WIRING IS POLARIZED?

AH.

BUT I'D LIKE YOU TO EXPLAIN AGAIN AS IF I KNOW ABSOLUTELY NOTHING WHATSOEVER.

NO. SORRY.

YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW ANYTHING, DO YOU?

NO.

DO YOU KNOW THE DIFFER-ENCE BETWEEN ATX AND MATX?

THAT'S RIGHT! I'LL LEAVE EVERYTHING UP TO YOU! JUST CHOOSE WHATEVER YOU THINK I CAN HANDLE.

YOU CAN'T GO BACK EMPTY-HANDED?

BUT AS A MAN, I CAN'T JUST GIVE UP! I'VE COME ALL THIS WAY AND I CAN'T GO BACK EMPTY-HANDED!

WELL, I DID LIKE HE SAID.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

OK. WE'LL FIGURE SOME-THING OUT.

I BOUGHT A READY-MADE PC.

USED

IF I CAN LEARN FROM THIS AND MOVE ON, THEN I CAN WRITE THIS OFF AS A GOOD DEAL. I'LL JUST HAVE TO BUCKLE DOWN AND REALLY START LEARNIN' ABOUT COMPUTERS.

OH, WELL. LOTS OF TIMES, BUYING SOMETHIN' YOU DON'T NEED TURNS OUT TO BE A GOOD LESSON.

HOW DID THINGS TURN OUT LIKE THIS? THE WHOLE POINT WAS FOR ME TO **BUILD** MY OWN PC!

I MEAN, WE LEAVE DONUT MAKIN' TO GUYS IN THE DONUT SHOPS, RIGHT? IF WE CAN LET SOMEONE ELSE HANDLE THAT KIND OF STUFF FOR US, THEN WE SHOULD! MY REAL GOAL IS TO LEARN WHAT YOU CAN **DO** WITH COMPUTERS, NOT HOW YOU MAKE 'EM! WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT, BUYIN' A READY-MADE PC IS DEFINITELY THE WAY TO GO. AT LEAST, THAT'S HOW I'M GONNA RATIONALIZE IT.

WAIT A MINUTE. IT'S NOT LIKE I'M IN THE PC-MAKIN' BUSINESS OR ANYTHING. WHY SHOULD I HAVE TO GO OUT OF MY WAY TO BUILD MY OWN COMPUTER?! THAT'S WHAT PC MAKERS ARE FOR!

WE WENT TO DESTRADE AND TOTALLY KICKED THEIR ASSES!

HUH?

HEY, LOOK! IT'S FUJIMOTO!

A MAN SHOULD TRY TO DO AS MUCH STUFF HIMSELF AS HE CAN!

WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT, RELYING ON SOMEONE ELSE TO DO STUFF FOR YOU JUST ISN'T A GOOD IDEA.

I GUESS UP TILL NOW, WE'VE BEEN RELYING ON YOU A LOT. SORRY ABOUT THAT.

I THINK SO, TOO! HELL, HE'D BE A POSTER CHILD FOR LOSERS!

ANYONE WHO'D RELY ON SOMEONE ELSE TO DO EVERYTHING FOR HIM IS JUST A LOSER!

. . . .

. . . . . .

CRKK

HELL, I DON'T KNOW. I'M JUST A SIMPLE THUG, SO I'M NO GOOD WITH WORDS AND SHIT. I'M TRYIN' TO THINK OF A GOOD EXAMPLE...HEH.

SOCIETY WILL PROBABLY GET ANGRY THAT A BUNCH OF HOOLIGANS LIKE US ARE TALKIN' ALL HIGH AND MIGHTY, BUT...

IF YOU'RE GONNA USE A COMPUTER, IT'S BETTER TO BUILD IT YOURSELF!

I GUESS ONE WAY OF PUTTIN' IT IS...

HE'S GOT A POINT.

WHY'D YOU HAVE TO USE A COMPUTER AS AN EXAMPLE?!

BWACK

FUJIMOTO! THAT'S *YOUR* COMPUTER!

VOLUME 10 ★ THE END

IN CELEBRATION OF A VERY SPECIAL INSERT CROMARTIE HIGH'S 10TH VOLUME

BONUS MANGA

1

WHAT YOU ARE ABOUT TO READ IS, IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE, A MOST MIRACULOUS MANGA! IT'S GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH *CROMARTIE*, BUT HOW ABOUT WE SAY THAT'S THAT AND THIS IS THIS AND JUST DO IT! OR, RATHER, IT'S ALREADY BEEN DONE!

SPECIAL SELF-CONTAINED STORY

TOWARD THE ETERNAL DARKNESS

This manga was drawn at the request of a certain magazine doing a special edition about the rock group Mr. Children. The band members are apparently fans of *Cromartie High*, so we were asked to provide a short manga. About Mr. Children.

EDITOR Anyway, that's how things stand. What should I tell Mr. Children? Incidentally, "Mr. Children" isn't a person: it's the band's name.

NONAKA Yes, I know.

EDITOR What?! You do?

NONAKA You're talking about the group that Kazutoshi Sakurai sings vocals for, right? Yeah, I've heard of them. They're famous.

EDITOR Wow! That's great that you know so much about them! Anyway, will you do it?

NONAKA Mmm, but are they really fans of my work?

EDITOR It certainly looks like it! Apparently, the band members will give us autographs as proof!

NONAKA Whoa, really? Still, the magazine editor could just sign it himself and we wouldn't know the difference.

EDITOR You've got a point. Wow, you're pretty sharp! If it were me, that's what **I'd** do!

NONAKA I bet that editor who came to you with the request has got samples of their autographs and is copying them right now!

EDITOR Yeah, I can see that...Ah! Here's what we do: We ask them to write "To Mr. Nonaka" on the side! There's no way he could forge that!

NONAKA That's a good idea.

EDITOR Right?!

NONAKA Wait a minute, though.

EDITOR Now what?

NONAKA Well, I was just wondering, what if Mr. Children has already signed autographs for a **different** Mr. Nonaka?

EDITOR You're right! The editor could track that person down and borrow the autographs to make his forgery! Of course, it would be a whole lot easier just to get autographs from the real Mr. Children.

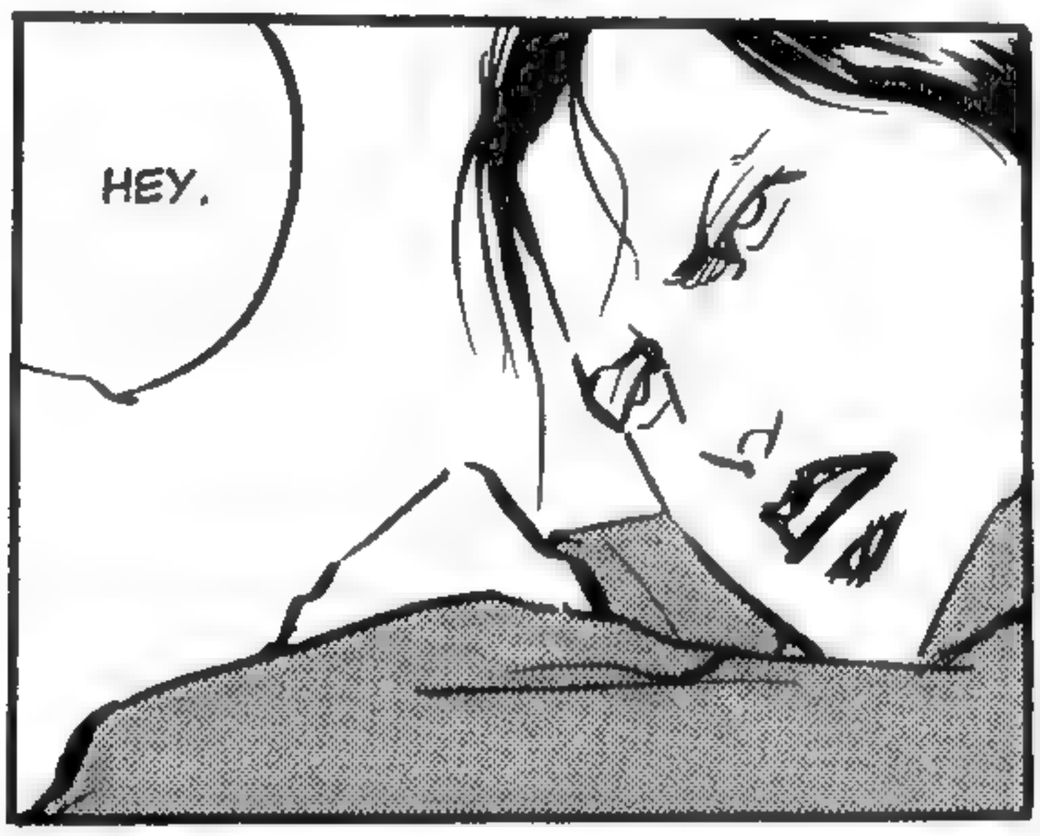
NONAKA True. Real autographs, huh? Ok, I'll do it!

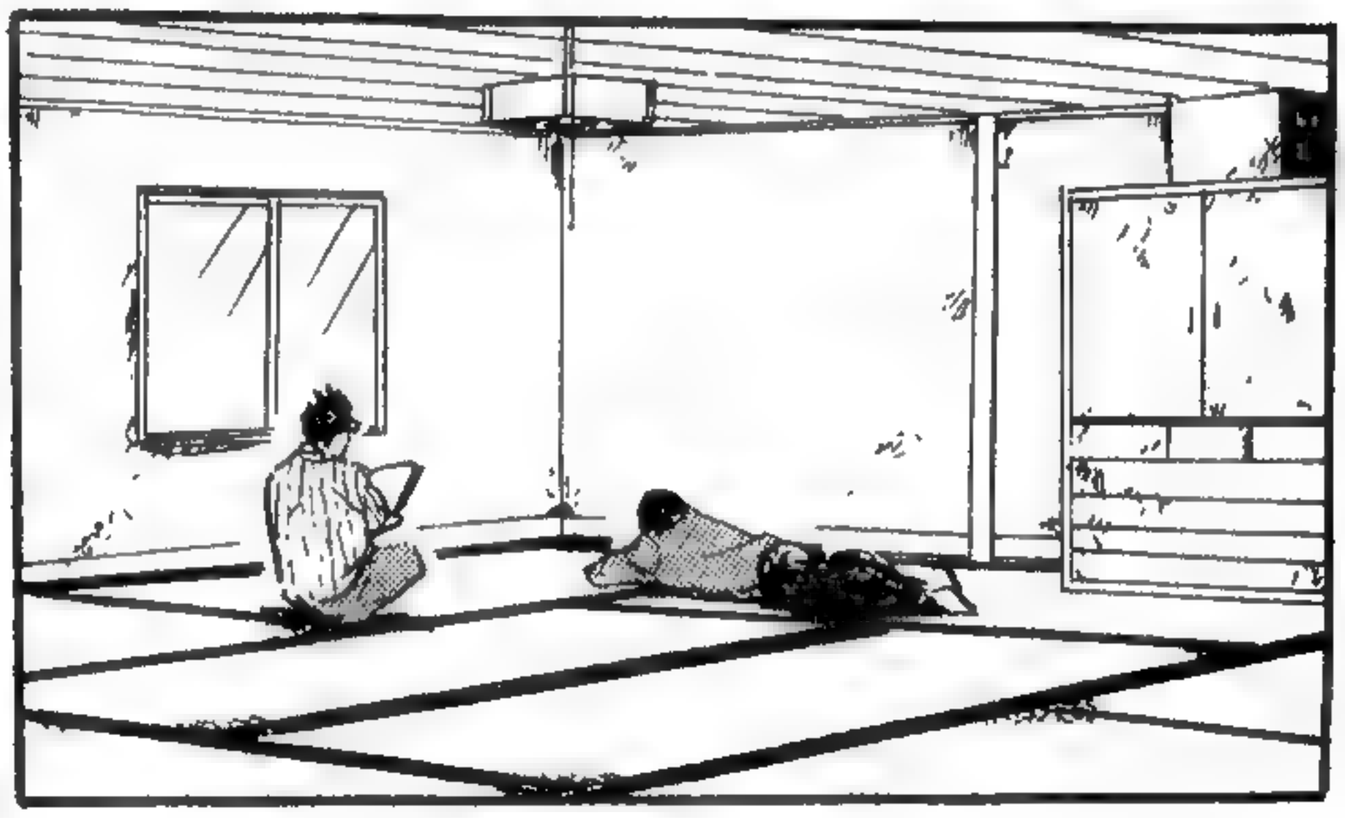
EDITOR You will?!

Thus, Mr. Nonaka provided a Mr. Children-related manga...and received no autographs, prompting bouts of betrayal from himself and the editor. However, just before the volume entered the editorial stage, a single sheet of thick paper arrived in the mail, bearing the names of Mr. Sakurai and the rest of the band. What's more, it was addressed to "To Nonaka-sama." It really **was** from Mr. Children!

SPECIAL SELF-CONTAINED STORY

TOWARD THE ETERNAL DARKNESS





I JUST THOUGHT I'D ASK. I MEAN, IT GETS A LITTLE BORING ALWAYS TALKING ABOUT RESTAURANTS, RIGHT?

WHY?

YEAH, I GUESS.

YEAH, I KNOW. YOU'VE NEVER ONCE TALKED ABOUT MUSIC. I'M SURPRISED YOU'VE EVEN HEARD THE NAME.

I FEEL I SHOULD POINT OUT THAT WHILE I KNOW OF THEM, I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT THEM.

JUST THE OBVIOUS STUFF. I COULDN'T TELL YOU THE NAMES OF ANY OF THEIR SONGS, BUT IF I'M OUT SOMEWHERE AND I HEAR ONE, I CAN GO, "AH, THAT'S MR. CHILDREN."

SO HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THEM?

THAT'S WHAT I'M SAYING--I DON'T KNOW ANY OF THE SONG NAMES, BUT I'LL KNOW ONE WHEN I HEAR IT. THAT'S HOW MUCH I KNOW ABOUT MR. CHILDREN.

YOU CAN'T NAME ANY OF THEIR SONGS, BUT IF YOU HEAR ONE YOU'LL KNOW IT'S THEIRS? WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?

. . . . . .

CHECKED? UH, NO.

HOW DO YOU REALLY KNOW IT'S MR. CHILDREN?! HAVE YOU EVER CHECKED?

ARE YOU HEARING YOURSELF? IF YOU CAN'T EVEN **NAME** THE SONG YOU'RE LISTENING TO...

HUH?!

NAH, NO WAY. EVEN SOMEONE LIKE ME WHO KNOWS NEXT TO NOTHING ABOUT MUSIC WOULDN'T MAKE THAT MISTAKE. NOT THAT I'VE EVER CHECKED, THOUGH.

THEN HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT WHAT YOU THINK IS A MR. CHILDREN SONG ISN'T REALLY A SABURO KITAJIMA SONG OR SOMETHING?!

NOW YOU'RE JUST BEING OBTUSE. I'D SAY I KNOW AS MUCH ABOUT MR. CHILDREN AS THE AVERAGE PERSON.

NOT BEING ABLE TO NAME A SINGLE SONG BUT CLAIMING TO KNOW ONE WHEN YOU HEAR IT MEANS YOU KNOW PRETTY MUCH NOTHING, WOULDN'T YOU SAY?

YOU KNOW WHAT I THINK? I THINK YOU KNOW SO LITTLE ABOUT MR. CHILDREN THAT MAYBE YOU SHOULDN'T BE SAYING YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THEM AT ALL.

YOU LIKE PUTTING THINGS INTO GRAPHS, HUH?

FINE. I'LL PUT THIS INTO A GRAPH.

IF WE GO BY YOUR STANDARDS, THERE'LL BE NO END TO IT: TO BE SOMEONE WHO "KNOWS" MR. CHILDREN, YOU HAVE TO BE ABLE TO NAME ALL THE MEMBERS, KNOW THEIR BLOOD TYPES, AND SO ON AND SO FORTH.

A

You've been a fan since the band first debuted and you never miss a concert.

B

You know the first and last names of all the members.

C

You can name two or three of their songs.

D

You can't name any of their songs but you can recognize one when you hear it.

E

You've heard the name "Mr. Children," but you're not sure what it's all about.

F

You know nothing at all about Mr. Children and are hearing the name now for the first time.

AS YOU CAN SEE...

I UNDERSTAND WHERE YOU'RE COMING FROM, BUT I THINK YOUR GRAPH IS KIND OF MEANING-LESS.

WOULDN'T YOU SAY YOU'D HAVE TO AT LEAST BE IN CATEGORY C TO SAY YOU KNOW MR. CHILDREN?

GOING BY THIS, YOU FALL INTO CATEGORY D HERE.

IS THAT YOU WANT ME TO SAY, "NO, I DON'T KNOW ABOUT MR. CHILDREN." RIGHT?

ULTIMATELY, WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT...

FINE. I KNOW ABSOLUTELY NOTHING ABOUT MR. CHILDREN. HAPPY?

PRETTY MUCH, YEAH.

HM?

HERE'S THE THING, THOUGH.

. . . .

WELL, SO LONG AS WE UNDER-STAND EACH OTHER.

THAT'S THE TRUTH. IT'S HOW I HONESTLY FEEL.

WHEN I HEAR A MR. CHILDREN SONG, I ALWAYS THINK IT'S REALLY GOOD.

BUT I'VE BEEN OUT SOMEWHERE AND HEARD ONE OF THEIR SONGS AND THOUGHT TO MYSELF, "YEAH, THAT'S A GOOD SONG." AND I'M PRETTY DAMN PARTICULAR. I THINK THERE'S ROOM FOR LISTENERS LIKE ME, TOO.

NO, I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT THE BAND, AND I DON'T HAVE ANY OF THEIR CDS...

YEAH, I GUESS I WENT A LITTLE TOO FAR. SORRY.

. . . .

I'LL APOLOGIZE FOR ACTING LIKE I KNOW MORE THAN I DO, BUT I DON'T THINK I SHOULD BE CRITICIZED FOR MY LISTENING HABITS.

IT'S NOT ABOUT WHO DREW IT. YOU DON'T HAVE TO KNOW THAT. ACTUALLY, ANYONE WHO WOULD GO, "OH, THIS IS A VAN GOGH" OR "WELL, IT'S A CHAGALL" IS JUST BEING TAKEN IN BY THE ARTIST'S NAME. AND THAT'S PRETTY RIDICULOUS.

WHEN YOU PUT IT LIKE THAT, A PERSON CAN LOOK AT A PAINTING AND BE MOVED BY IT... AND THAT'S ENOUGH.

I WAS GETTING A LITTLE TOO FULL OF MYSELF, BUT YOUR STORY OPENED MY EYES. THANKS.

SOMETIMES KNOWING TOO MUCH OF SOMETHING CAN MAKE YOU FORGET WHAT'S IMPORTANT ABOUT IT.

HEH. YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO OUT OF YOUR WAY OR ANYTHING. ANYWAY, LET'S TALK ABOUT MR. CHILDREN AGAIN SOMETIME.

WELL, I WAS THE ONE GOING ON ABOUT HOW GOOD THEIR SONGS ARE WHEN I DON'T EVEN OWN A SINGLE CD. I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO GO OUT AND BUY ONE. HA HA HA!

I DID SOME RESEARCH. WHAT I THOUGHT WAS MR. CHILDREN REALLY **WAS** SABURO KITAJIMA!

WHAT'S WRONG?

THE NEXT DAY

♪ THE END ♪

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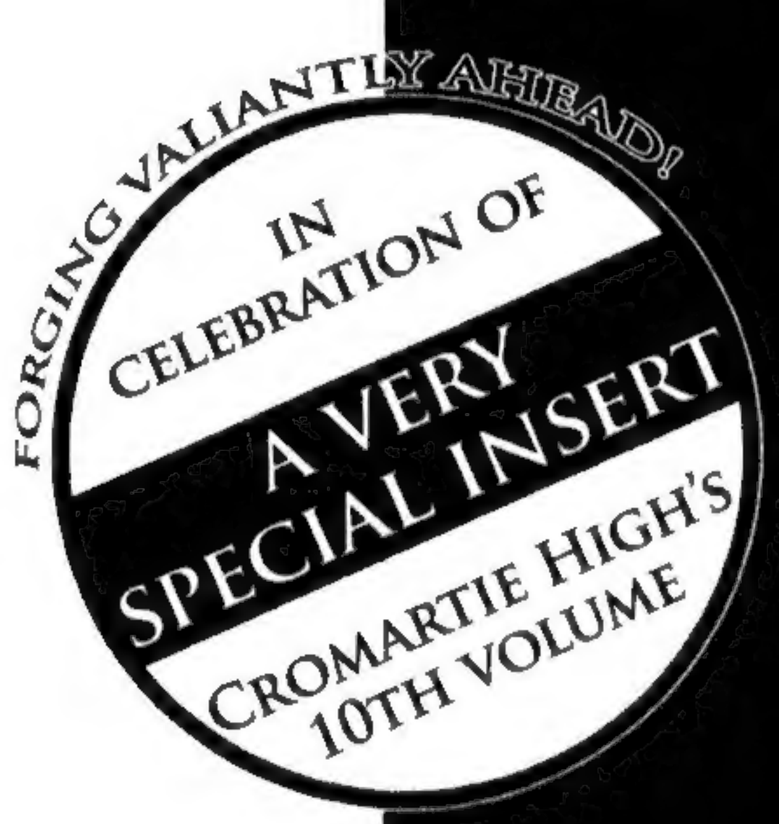

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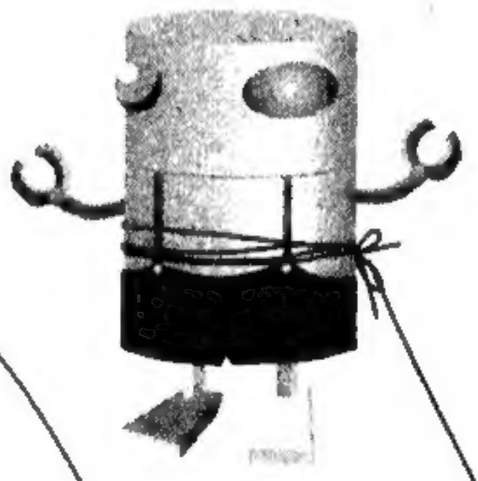
Eiji Nonaka



For 10 volumes, the halls of Cromartie High School have been visited by actors, aliens and a surprising number of simians, but one burning question has forever remained unanswered—are there actually any teachers at Cromartie High?!

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CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL VOL.11

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